DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 291 832 UD 026 028

TITLE Metrolink: Developing Human Resources through Metropolitan Collaboration.
INSTITUTION Institute for Educational Leadership, Washington, D.C.
SPONS AGENCY Danforth Foundation, St. Louis, Mo.
PUB DATE Mar 86
NOTE 70p.
PUB TYPE Reports - Evaluative/Feasibility (142)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC03 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Agency Cooperation; Community Cooperation; Cooperation; *Cooperative Programs; *Human Resources; *Institutional Cooperation; Labor Force Development; Long Range Planning; *Participative Decision Making; Program Design; Social Planning; Urban Areas; *Urban Improvement; Urban Problems
IDENTIFIERS Commitment; Connecticut (Hartford); Georgia (Atlanta); Indiana (Indianapolis); Kentucky (Louisville); Massachusetts (Boston); Minnesota (Minneapolis); Missouri (Saint Louis); Oregon (Portland); *Partnerships

ABSTRACT

The MetroLink project supported and studied the process of collaboration for human resource development in American metropolitan areas. The project was conducted in 1984 and 1985 in the following eight metropolitan areas: Atlanta, Georgia; Boston, Massachusetts; Hartford, Connecticut; Indianapolis, Indiana; Louisville, Kentucky; Minneapolis, Minnesota; Saint Louis, Missouri; and Portland, Oregon. The study documentation indicated that: (1) successful collaboration to overcome longstanding systemic problems in human resource development can be achieved; (2) there appear to be five stages in the development of collaboration; (3) different elements of leadership, history, and levels of commitment combine to determine the nature of collaborative alliances; (4) 12 themes apparently characterize collaborative efforts. The 5 phases and 12 themes of the collaborative process are discussed at length in the body of the report. MetroLink also achieved the following specific outcomes in each site: (1) a coordinator trained in assessing and gathering information about a metropolitan area's political and economic environments, and in using external networks to bring information and expertise to the area; (2) a cadre of leaders who understand the complexities of metropolitan area planning and policymaking processes, and effective strategies for intervening in those processes; (3) a process for documenting and assessing cooperative activities among schools, businesses, higher education institutions, and among labor organizations, governmental agencies and individuals; (4) a specific, publicly visible example of results gained from cooperative efforts; and (5) a small national network capable of disseminating experiences gained through MetroLink to additional metropolitan areas. The cross-sector collaboration process in each of the eight metropolitan areas is discussed. (BJV)

2-25-88

ED291832

METROLINK

Developing Human Resources through Metropolitan Collaboration

A Report

to

The Danforth Foundation

Submitted by: The Institute for Educational Leadership, Inc.

March, 1986

UD026028

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METROLINK

Developing Human Resources through Metropolitan Collaboration

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The MetroLink Project

Need for Knowledge About Collaborative Processes Supporting Long-Range Human Resource Development

Encouragement of collaborative activity has been a theme of this era of reports and recommendations about the state of the nation's institutions and policies. Some 200 state committees and commissions, public and private, are currently attempting to improve public education. Many other organizations are attempting to deal with youth unemployment and related problems as well.

There is broad agrement that if our communities fail to develop local capacities for developing the potential of our people, the social and economic prospects for all of us will significantly diminish as we enter the twenty-first century. Reports emanating from leaders of the private business sector stress that our nation's human resources are one factor in the economic equation to which we must pay increasing attention. Most reports claim that public-private partnerships would be useful vehicles for bringing coherence to fragmented systems and initiatives for improving the state of education and training at all levels.

These reports have increasingly focused the attention of metropolitan leaders upon systemic issues in human resource development. These issues cut across many sectors and cover a broad range of matters -- the decline of the appeal of higher education to young people; the quality of postsecondary training; shifting demographic patterns; future labor market needs; mobilization and direction of leadership, resources and policies to improve the public schools and increase youth employment. Because these issues broadly affect organizations, institutions, and individuals throughout the private and public sectors, it seems not only reasonable but imperative for leaders to collaborate in addressing common problems.

MetroLink grew from a conviction that many of the critical issues affecting organizations, institutions and social policies concerning human resources could best be addressed through leaders who collaborate to share programs and resources. IEL determined that understanding of processes underlying collaborative leadership is weak in two ways. First, there is little solid analysis -- that is, based on concrete information in specific settings and gathered by informed participants -- about how effective collaboration takes place. Second, there is little acknowledgement of the complexity and difficulty of leadership in collaborative activities.

Multi-sector partnerships are among the first highly visible structures for collaborative effort. Partnerships are intended to develop, marshall, and deploy human resources long-range -- resources capable of meeting the changing economic, social and political needs of metropolitan communities. Many public--private partnerships are intended to address problems of youth unemployment, long-lasting employability of non-college-bound high school graduates, and improvement of public schooling.

IEL developed MetroLink in the belief that strategic thinking and concerted action depended upon understanding how collaboration takes place. MetroLink coordinators therefore examined how partnerships move from particular programs to involvement of a whole delivery system, and how consensus is developed to improve policymaking and long-range planning.

The MetroLink project, conducted on site in eight metropolitan areas, supported and studied the process of collaboration for human resource development in American metropolitan areas. MetroLink emphasized long-range planning because practically all of the available information about multi-sector collaboration for addressing issues of education, employment, and training has been anecdotal and descriptive discussion of short-term programs and activities.

The analyses took place over a two-year period (1984 and 1985) and were conducted on site among leaders of public and private sector organizations and institutions concerned with education and training for human resource development. The project was conducted by the Institute for Educational Leadership (IEL) with funds provided by the Danforth Foundation.

IEL identified diverse metropolitan areas where multi-sector collaborative efforts were being attempted or planned. The eight areas were Atlanta, Boston, Hartford, Indianapolis, Louisville, Minneapolis, Saint Louis, and Portland, Oregon. Each community had the following characteristics:

- A distinct issues focus and at least a fledgling structure for developing collaborative leadership;
- Evidence of commitment of community leadership to developing collaborative solutions to local issues;
- Assurance from an education agency of involvement in the project;
- Availability of a coordinator with access to area leaders; several coordinators were established in organizations that included and fostered multi--sector leadership; and
- Diversity among sectors/institutions that would be involved: business, education and government.

IEL decided to investigate existing or newly evolving processes and structures rather than to establish new forums. Each site coordinator largely determined his or her project issues, participants, and methods. MetroLink stressed analysis of behavior in each setting and comparisons and contrasts among patterns and trends. By identifying questions generated during the process, IEL focused issues for the next stage of analysis and experience in this emerging field of inquiry.

The small percentage of time available for each coordinator to spend specifically on involvement in the cross-site activities of the MetroLink project--about five percent--required their strong commitment toward exploring the anatomy of collaboration. The coordinators themselves strongly agreed that the successes of their own local efforts to achieve project objectives depended upon their establishing, using and sustaining their own networks, while supported in their efforts by IEL.

There were four types of documentation for the project:

(1) Reports and information exchanged at quarterly meetings among the site coordinators -- the richest source of information about the process of collaboration within and among the sites.

(2) Interim written reports from coordinators, newspaper articles, memoranda, minutes of meetings, etc.

(3) General information relating to all projects, provided by IEL, such as recent national reports, current research papers; and

(4) Interviews of significant leaders in local collaborative projects, conducted by site coordinators and IEL staff visits.

Goals

In order to create or enhance the capacity of local community leadership for long-term multi-sector planning to develop human resources, MetroLink emphasized four goals:

(1) To identify barriers to cooperation in formulating policy among a variety of sectors in each community,

(2) To understand relationships between long-term policy issues and current operational problems,

(3) To draw upon research and experience in other regions in order to help define policy options for resolving issues, and

(4) To begin negotiation processes among public and private decisionmakers to resolve or mitigate problems.

Outcomes

The project resulted in greater understanding of commonalities and differences among communities in each MetroLink site and improved receptivity among local leaders to the concept and practice of reaching individual and group goals collaboratively. These outcomes led to three recommendations for leaders engaged in similar collaborative efforts:

1. To document what is happening;
2. To provide opportunities for systematic reflection about the process of collaboration; and
3. To strengthen their collective efforts through exchanging information about goals, activities, successful strategies, policy issues, and problems with others engaged in similar initiatives.

MetroLink documentation also revealed that:

- Successful collaboration to overcome longstanding systemic problems in human resource development can be achieved.
- There appear to be five stages in development of collaboration.
- Different elements of leadership, history, and levels of commitment combine to determine the purposes, contours, strengths, vitality, durability, and visibility of collaborative alliances.
- Twelve themes apparently characterize collaborative efforts. MetroLink site coordinators' reflections over two years offer insights about processes, resources and conditions for collaboration.

MetroLink also produced the following specific outcomes in each site:

- An onsite coordinator trained in assessing and gathering information about a metropolitan area's political and economic environments, and in using external networks to bring information and expertise to the area.
- A cadre of leaders with greater understanding of the complexities of metropolitan area planning and policymaking processes, and effective strategies for intervening in those processes.
- A process for documenting and assessing cooperative activities among schools, businesses, higher education institutions, and labor organizations, governmental agencies and individuals.
- Specific, publicly visible examples of results gained from cooperative efforts.
- A small national network capable of disseminating experiences gained through MetroLink to additional metropolitan areas.

What is Collaboration?

MetroLink coordinators viewed collaboration as a continuum; progress along the continuum occurs in phases. Factors affecting each phase include the history of inter-sector cooperation in the area; political, cultural, economic circumstances; community expectations; leadership available in relevant organizations and institutions; the number and importance of factors that distract attention from collaboration. The urgency of problems creates pressure for collaboration; if the problems are not severe, the community may be inclined to maintain the status quo; yet if they are too severe, a climate of crisis and distrust may inhibit constructive discussion.

The metropolitan areas in MetroLink offer many similarities and differences among barriers to collaboration, opportunities for multi-sector activities, planning structures, leadership persons, the business and education/training communities, and relationships among public, private and non-profit sectors. The following working definitions serve as a framework for considering comparisons and contrasts across the eight sites:

Metropolitan: pertaining to actual and potential resources of education, training, and employment of any region surrounding a large core city, and therefore not confined within conventional political, legislated or geographic boundaries.

Human Resources: People, including children and youth, currently residing in a metropolitan region, and those who will be entering the region or may be attracted to it, who are capable of contributing to the economic, cultural and social well-being of the metropolitan community. This definition emphasizes that long-range planning must consider demographic projections.

Development: The process of providing access to and use of resources in education, training and/or employment in a metropolitan community; of learning new skills, information and competencies which increase the economic and social choices available to individuals, groups and organizations; and of building capacities among individuals, groups and organizations to contribute to the community.

Collaboration: The process by which two or more different kinds of individuals and/or groups cooperate in activities for mutual benefit. Collaboration requires sustained joint commitments to accomodate to different ways of working and communicating, and often to contrasting sets of values in creating productive methods for accomplishing common goals.

Partnership: An agreement among representative decision-makers in organizations belonging to different economic sectors (public and private profit/non-profit) to cooperate for mutual benefit. In its policy statement recommending public-private partnership, the Committee for Economic Development recommends linking these dimensions in such a way that the participants contribute to the benefit of the broader community while promoting their own individual or organizational interest."[1]

The experiences of the coordinators in the eight projects within MetroLink indicate five phases of collaboration for metropolitan human resource development.

Phase One: **Community leaders from different sectors agree upon a need to collaborate and create a structure for action.**

This phase is characterized by initiatives by local political leaders, business leaders, and top-level educational administrators and boards. The structure for action is often well-publicized -- formation of an office to coordinate school-business partnerships or an adopt-a-school program, or a proclamation of new goals for a prominent existing organization.

o The Saint Louis Chamber of Commerce, using seed money provided by the Danforth Foundation, enlisted cooperation between the schools and the local business community, using Ralston Purina as the lead company.

o Atlanta's formal organization of partnerships began in 1974-75, when the business community first approached the school system. Following meetings throughout Atlanta that surveyed public opinions about the school system, Superintendent Alonzo Crim announced in August 1980 the systemwide goal that every student would achieve the national norm in literacy skills by 1985, with 20 percent of the gain to be realized in the 1980-81 school year.

o In December, 1983, the Greater Indianapolis Progress Committee created a task force to persuade the business community to provide summer jobs for disadvantaged youth and to "develop an apparatus that will maximize employment opportunities for youth...in 1984 and future years."

Phase Two: **Leaders' commitment becomes visible as multi-sector activities, short term and long-term are publicized. Depending on circumstances, public awareness of their commitment may grow swiftly, or it may take years to develop.**

o In Hartford, the result of the planning effort jointly funded by the Board of Education and the Greater Hartford Chamber of Commerce was Workplaces, an alternative careers high school program for grades 10-12, where young people could develop marketable skills, have work experiences, career development and remediation programs along with their academic program. Workplaces conducted eight demonstration projects funded by the Department of Labor's CETA youth titles in 1980.

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[1]. Public-Private Partnership: An Opportunity for Urban Communities, (Committee for Economic Development, New York, Washington, February, 1982), p.2.

- Among several initiatives in Atlanta, Adopt-A-School has provided a broad range of activities enabling people in all sectors, including small and large companies, religious organizations, and cultural agencies, to help the schools. Business leaders were asked to clarify their standards for employability, and the school system committed itself to meeting those standards regardless of race, poverty or other circumstances.

Phase Three: **Leaders agree that collaboration must confront long-range systemic problems, and they identify barriers to further collaboration.**

- Leaders in Portland, OR organized city government agencies, the school district, the Chamber of Commerce, and the Urban League to reduce minority youth unemployment. A consortium of these groups joined the Urban Network Project, which links multi-sector youth employment collaborative projects in urban areas across the country. The Project combined resources for improving existing in-school programs of work experience, career education, pre-employment skill development and job placement. A policy committee called the Leaders Roundtable, composed of decision-makers from all major segments of the community, coordinates policy development around youth employability and employment.

Phase Four: **Leaders and their constituents sacrifice "turf", authority/power, resources, status, priorities and traditions in order to overcome barriers to collaboration.**

The people designated to lead a collaborative effort are tied to their roles in specific organizations as well as to their overarching roles in addressing social dilemma. Their responsibilities include helping others to transcend their habitual, parochial loyalties. Collaboration has reached an advanced stage when leaders are able to withstand the stress of major conflict and set aside their traditional loyalties in order to carry out these broader roles.

Phase Five: **Long-range commitment of persons in leadership positions is assured, and authoratative structures for collaborative decisionmaking for long-range collaboration are securely established.**

The efforts of some of the eight MetroLink communities will continue and probably improve over time. For instance, the Indianapolis partnership, which developed Partners 2000, has grown in the past two years. In 1985 it placed well over 3,000 disadvantaged young people in summer job experiences, a major increase in private sector participation. The working relationships among the schools, the City and the private sector are strong. The most significant success story: virtually every eligible young person in Marion County signed up for the program and, in fact, was placed in a summer job experience.

Process Themes

Over an eighteen-month period, MetroLink coordinators reflected about a range of issues and trends arising around their disparate projects. A dozen major themes characterized their explorations of collaboration across the eight sites:

Theme # 1 *Inter-sector collaboration is a process. Although processes used to achieve similar aims may result in similar structures and methods, genuine collaboration cannot be bottled for replication, codified into formulas or mechanical procedures.*

MetroLink coordinators felt strongly that collaboration evolved in very distinct ways peculiar to the political, economic, demographic and institutional circumstances, individuals, and changing events in each of their eight metropolitan regions. Exchanges of information and materials among coordinators revealed many generic characteristics among project components.

Collaboration cannot be reduced to one set of replicable characteristics. A systemic approach to collaboration will acknowledge the complexities of institutional change, will be long-range, and will of necessity focus upon the extensive political and social negotiations required to address persistent issues.

Theme # 2 *Many motivations combine to stimulate cross-sector cooperative activities. They reflect needs, expectations, and perceived self-interest. People and institutions are moved to collaborate by a common view of an important perceived need. It is when major participants have a common interest or goal and are struggling hard to overcome barriers to achieving the goal that collaboration is most likely to bring progress toward durable consensus for action.*

Unless there is a commonly perceived need, little can be done to stimulate collaborative activity. If participants are seriously committed to addressing long-term social issues in their community, they must be prepared to sacrifice cherished traditions such as access, power and information. When a partnership is consistently portrayed as free of significant problems or tensions, it is probably superficial. A partnership that seems stymied by dilemmas, but that grapples with resistance among individuals and organizations, and shifting perceptions among its participants may be genuinely struggling to overcome personal and institutional obstacles to collaborative effort.

Two conventional responses to major institutional problems are resignation in the face of political, social, cultural or economic obstacles, or development of trivial public relations exercises in the name of "partnerships." These exercises are characterized by excessive rhetoric, lack of challenging goals and insubstantial achievements in the face of the problems that they are supposed to address. On the other hand, the difficulties that participants must work through in resolving issues of collaboration -- the tough job of hammering out new working relationships among individuals, organizations and institutions -- are rarely made public.

Theme #3 *It is critically important to maintain as many of the elements needed in the infrastructure of metropolitan collaboration as possible.*

At times, publicly visible results may be disappointing, and collaboration may appear to be moribund; nevertheless, holding potential pieces of a comprehensive system in place for the future is important.

Publicly visible outcomes of effective collaboration occur at the end of the process. Although many necessary ingredients of effective collaboration may be present, various circumstances -- lack of leadership, political events -- may hinder the momentum for collaboration for a period. Yet this does not mean that collaboration is not happening or that structures designed to stimulate joint efforts should be dismantled because they are not achieving an immediate goal. To the contrary, they should be maintained so that they will be available when they are needed. When the right elements are finally present -- a change of leaders, a change of attitude -- collaboration will proceed.

Theme #4 *Events of the "real world" affect structures, goals, objectives and processes of collaboration, positively and negatively. Those who facilitate collaboration must develop a range of strategies and tactics for communication, problem-solving and focusing attention on long-range aims.*

Sometimes unforseen events can delay, even wreck the progress of well-planned collaborative efforts. Any number of events, large and small, are capable of distracting attention from the long-range aims of collaboration -- for example, the temporary imperatives of local government, the crises that grab local headlines, the whims of political leaders, national events, changing personal priorities of key decision-makers. A group or individuals must be willing and able to maintain the course of collaborative efforts.

Theme #5 *Collaboration changes participants' viewpoints about the roles, functions and capacities of other groups and individuals during the process.*

MetroLink was designed to explore broad issues and strategies of collaboration which might not have a programmatic goal, but which would require changes in the ways that leaders relate to one another, define and perceive their aims and methods. Successful collaboration therefore might not result in implementing a specific project; instead, it would probably result in rethinking goals or finding ways to do a job better.

Participants must be able to fashion a goal that all can find a way to agree upon. That is, they must invest energy in finding a legitimate common goal, not in disagreeing that one ought to be found. Collaboration requires that key participants change the ways that they perceive and behave toward one another and the environment. As they attempt to design ways of responding to needs for collective well-being, they constantly redefine the terms of their agreements in order to reflect their growing understanding of mutual interests and goals.

Theme #6 *Intermediary groups and individuals can facilitate multi-sector collaboration without always being in politically neutral organizations or positions. They can be effective if they are trusted by key participants to promote collaboration rather than institutional or organizational vested interests.*

MetroLink site coordinators often served in this role. Two coordinators who were formally affiliated with school systems or universities noted that they did not view themselves as sharing the vested interests of their institutions. Some were not generally perceived as partisan, either -- representing the "higher education establishment," the mayor, or the superintendent of schools, for instance. One coordinator reported never feeling a sense of "territoriality" when exploring a topic of general community concern.

The Atlanta coordinator, although an employee of Georgia State University, has never been identified primarily with the University in his work with The Atlanta Partnership, for example, in developing the Principals' Institute. The Hartford MetroLink coordinator came directly from the business community, yet she constantly mediates between the major representatives of the school system and business leaders. Her role as Vice President of Human Resource Development within the Greater Hartford Chamber of Commerce requires that she maintain a multi-sector perspective.

Theme # 7 *Facilitators of collaboration need and benefit from opportunities to communicate across projects and to reflect upon the experience of others in similar or contrasting situations. They learn from each other.*

MetroLink coordinators stated that they had shared specific information -- for example, instruments and methods of tracking the employment history of recent high school graduates -- and had identified other resources that were useful to them. Business representatives from one site visited another. The site coordinators stated that the opportunities to reflect upon the implications of similar patterns and experiences of collaboration in other sites was invaluable in two ways.

First, people who have the special roles and responsibilities of the MetroLink coordinators -- strategically to foster and monitor metropolitan collaboration -- are not only unusual, but they rarely have the chance to exchange views, deliberately to step back from what they are doing and attempt to understand it in a larger context.

Second, because the coordinators occupied other roles practically 95 percent of their time, the main occasions they had to focus their attention not on the details of collaborative activities but on the process of collaboration itself were the MetroLink documentation assignments and meetings. Coordinators were also able to observe commonalities among projects and to draw implications from their own efforts. For example, they agreed on the following:

- The importance of a top-level leader whose attention and concern are focused on the central issues for collaboration; and

- The need for people skillful in handling logistics and tasks for carrying out the ideas of higher level decisionmakers -- people who understand the dynamics of collaboration, who take care of interruptions, who set climates that allow others to work well together.

Theme #8 *A "culture of collaboration" -- special ways of communicating, especially through widely-recognized and respected informal channels -- evolves during a project. Participants develop special ways of communicating, a history of relationships, and informal understandings that respect but extend beyond their formal roles and functions.*

Collaboration among people and institutions is a function of the personalities of the actors, and political opportunism, as well as common recognition of long-range community needs.

Portland and Indianapolis illustrate how distinct habits, expectations and special relationships have developed.

Clear criteria for membership in the Portland Leaders Roundtable have developed in order to assure that members' actions will have maximum influence on community policies and institutional practices. A central tenet of the Portland Roundtable has been that the interaction of the powerful actors engaged in collaboration will largely determine the direction of collaboration. Because the Roundtable is intended to promote fast action when it is desired, decisionmaking power is essential for membership and attendance. Consequently, members may not designate staff to attend in their place. Similarly, a person is not automatically entitled to membership in the Roundtable solely by virtue of his or her title.

In Atlanta, Superintendent Crim holds an informal breakfast meeting each month. Participants share and freely explore a range of concerns and interests. It is a critically important means of maintaining informal lines of communication between educational, business, religious and political leaders.

Theme #9 *Multi-sector partnerships respond to the new politics of education created by the federal government's exit from the educational scene. Shifts in roles of state legislatures and education agencies have strongly affected metropolitan area priorities in human resource development.*

In Louisville, private sector resources are supplanting government largesse. Corporations are currently playing a significant role in providing computer education. Computers have proliferated throughout the schools because local firms have contributed equipment and funds. A statewide conference to promote partnerships between local public schools and community organizations and groups emphasized compensation for the lack of federal resources through creating links with community businesses and agencies. State legislation in Kentucky supporting the development of school-community partnerships reflects local efforts to create new sources of support for local public schools.

In Portland and Hartford, the Private Industry Council's (PICs) remain the only significant source of funding for employment and training of the economically disadvantaged. These Councils, originally formed under Title VII of CETA, have become the conduit for Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA) funding, but without collaboration with other institutions and organizations dealing with youth employment, they merely contribute to fragmentation of policies and services. In both cities, the roles and resources of the PICs have affected and been influenced by collaborative activities. The unanimous approval by the Portland City Council of a collaborative decision to consolidate and assign to the PIC hundreds of thousands of local dollars in summer youth employment and training funds illustrates how collaboration has changed local priorities in funding patterns.

Theme #10 *Access to reliable information and the reporting of data are fast becoming critical issues for collaboration. Data about education/training institutions, practices and results are not politically neutral. They are often controversial, and their collection and dissemination may have many unexpected effects.*

Collaborators need to analyze the possible consequences of disseminating data-based information and think through the conditions for effective collaborative decisionmaking. Data-gathering and decision-making must be undertaken by the right figures and organizations, shared among participants and with the public at the right times, and by the right people.

MetroLink coordinators found that one major task in collaborative efforts appears to be the development of compatible systems of gathering and sharing information -- systems that effectively communicate to all sectors.

This theme has been insistent throughout the Hartford project. It reflects the fundamental tension at the heart of the collaborative process involving the school system and other organizations and institutions concerned with youth employability.

Theme # 11 *Collaboration is affected by a community's "social memories" -- of politically traumatic events, of controversial, powerful or widely-trusted and influential organizations, institutions, individuals and groups. These shared memories constitute positive and negative community perceptions of capacities and trustworthiness which stimulate or present barriers to multi-sector consensus about goals, objectives, participants and activities.*

Communities, through persons in opinion-setting positions, retain memories that often span several decades. Past failures, old agendas, and ancient hurts are easily resurrected. It is almost a universal defense mechanism for leaders to call up previous trouble spots when new ventures are suggested. This history must be dealt with before new processes can be developed with widespread support.

Theme #12 *In order to pursue long-range goals over time, multi-sector collaborators must gradually cease to depend greatly upon individual leaders and must broaden the capacity and share legitimacy among organizations and institutions for assuming leadership and taking action to solve problems.*

To "institutionalize" seems like such an attractive catch-all solution, practically eliminating the messy complexities of personalities, turf, shifting political agendas and changes in leadership. The term implies that once a special organization such as the Atlanta Partnership or Hartford's School/Business Collaborative (SBC) or Portland's Leaders Roundtable is created to sponsor and coordinate collaboration, the most intractable problems will be over.

While such an institution may serve this purpose admirably, development of a formal umbrella structure responsible for multi-sector activities is not necessarily effective. Such a structure might even inhibit collaboration if it were not fully recognized among all participants as legitimate and effective -- an adequate and desirable replacement of individually powerful or influential leaders. Perhaps the greatest attraction of institutionalization is stability of leadership. Participants in collaboration must constantly deal with the anxiety of whether a change of leaders would mean that their accomplishments would collapse.

No one in Atlanta likes to contemplate what might happen if Alonzo Crim were to leave in the near future, yet the Partnership may well be strong enough to sustain its influence without Crim. As Portland's Leaders Roundtable illustrated in its smooth management of an abrupt transition of mayors, commitment to structures for collaboration can help them prove to be very resilient.

Future Possibilities

The possibilities for stimulating metropolitan collaboration for long-range planning of human resource development are plentiful enough that communities can take advantage of a number of opportunities as they arise. Resources within and outside of MetroLink are evident and can be enlisted to assist the development of collaborative enterprises whenever appropriate.

The MetroLink project created a national network of coordinators whose knowledge of issues and processes of collaboration is combined with a first-hand experience with specific efforts conducted over a period of two years. This network is already tied to other networks concerned with similar policy issues, efforts to overcome barriers to cooperation, and potential sources of metropolitan leadership.

Characteristics and conditions for nurturing and supporting leadership have been identified and developed among the project sites. Networking, building skills for change agents, and other processes have also been developed and examined regularly through IEL. People who are engaged in collaboration must have opportunities to exchange ideas and resources, and discuss the process -- to reflect on what is happening along with others who are undergoing similar experiences. Diverse leaders also would benefit from opportunities to exchange ideas, strategies and resources with peers.

It is important for metropolitan leaders of collaboration to recognize the need for someone regularly to concentrate some part of his or her attention on the process of collaboration, to devote time and energy toward participation in a network of others who share that responsibility. Leaders should assign this role to someone who is close to the action and has access to key actors. Ideally the person documenting and facilitating the process should have opportunities to exchange ideas and to reflect with people in similar situations.

Given the extraordinary amount of national attention devoted to policy issues surrounding human resource development, it is encouraging to know that an enormous amount of collaborative activity is going on at different levels. Even in places where collaboration is not readily apparent, many resources and potential leaders of effective activities are in place.

We have learned a great deal now about the skills that promote desirable change in institutions which as recently as a decade ago seemed impervious to reform -- notably school systems, employment and training agencies, and entrenched political structures. In many instances where collaboration has not yet accomplished visible systemic change, essential elements of significant change are in place: resources for informal as well as formal communication around complex issues, a community power base, leaders who can put aside short-range self-interests to identify mutual interests, public awareness of a clear, important social problem.

There are four future steps for MetroLink. The first is to maintain linkages among existing sites of collaborative activities. The second is to identify other interested sites and enlist their key representatives in a growing network. The third is to enlarge the network by sharing its resources widely with related networks concerned with the same or related issues. The fourth step is to maintain structures for broad-based communication among all of these participants to understand and improve the process of collaboration itself, and to inform development of new generations of leaders.

METROLINK

DEVELOPING HUMAN RESOURCES THROUGH METROPOLITAN COLLABORATION

> **In the late seventies, Reverend Leon Sullivan, a national leader in the field of community-based employment of the disadvantaged, used a parable to explain why so many youth remain unemployed in spite of diverse and costly institutions and programs attempting to solve the problem of youth unemployment:**
>
> **A boy trapped in a deep hole called for help. Several adults ran to his aid, each offering rope for him to haul himself out, but each rope was too short. There was the "rope" of the public school system, -- old and tough and hard to handle. There was the employment and training "rope," new but thin and fragile. There was the higher education "rope," too far away for him to reach, the labor union "rope," the "rope" of the business community, and others. There was no shortage of ropes, but still the boy could not be saved.**
>
> **"Tie your ropes together," the boy said, "and let them down to me!"**

The Process of Collaboration in Eight Metropolitan Areas

Introduction. This monograph describes the process of collaboration that took place over a two-year period (1984 and 1985) among leaders of public and private sector organizations and institutions concerned with education and training for human resource development in eight metropolitan areas. The project, called MetroLink, was conducted by the Institute for Educational Leadership (IEL) with funds provided by the Danforth Foundation.

The report conveys four central messages:

1. Successful collaboration to overcome longstanding systemic problems in human resource development can be achieved.

2. Cross-sector collaboration develops in five stages.

3. As demonstrated in each of the eight communities where collaboration is helping to energize and focus citizens' activities, elements of leadership, history, and levels of commitment combine to determine the purpose, contours, strengths, vitality, durability, and visibility of collaborative alliances.

4. A dozen themes characterize collaborative efforts. Based on MetroLink site coordinators' reflections about their experiences over two years, these themes offer insights about processes, resources and conditions for collaboration.

MetroLink Was Designed to Encourage and Study Collaboration On-Site. In 1983, the Danforth Foundation granted funds to support MetroLink, a project of the Institute for Educational Leadership (IEL). MetroLink was designed to encourage and analyze the process of collaboration for long-range metropolitan human resource development in four to six regions across the country. The project stressed long-range planning because practically all of the available information about multi-sector collaboration for addressing issues of education, employment, and training dealt with short-term programs and activities which place minimal demands on either party to address serious, long-standing social issues in the community.

Few short-term partnership efforts have been rigorously evaluated. While thoughtful analyses of issues are evident in selected research studies, these analyses confirm that qualitative information about metropolitan collaboration is scarce. Most information about public-private partnerships consists of quantitative data and anecdotal descriptions.

During the early planning of MetroLink, IEL proposed to extend its role as an impartial mediating agency with wide access to policy analysis and expertise through its networks of educational and other leaders. IEL planned to draw upon its experience in convening neutral forums -- Washington Policy Seminars, Educational Staff Seminar and its State Education Policy Seminars, which have been sources of information about educational policy options for decisionmakers in some 40 state capitols and Washington, D.C.. IEL proposed to create forums designed to strengthen or stimulate regional collaboration for resolving complex policy issues concerning education, employment and training.

MetroLink was designed to create or enhance the capacity of local communities to establish long-term planning for human resource development. IEL predicted that MetroLink would have two major outcomes -- first, greater understanding of commonalities and differences among the sites; second, improved receptivity among local leaders to the concept and practice of reaching individual and group goals collaboratively.

MetroLink emphasized four major goals:

1. To identify barriers to cooperation in formulating policy among a variety of sectors in a community;

2. To understand relationships between long-term policy issues and current operational problems;

3. To draw upon research and experience in other regions in order to help define policy options for resolving issues; and

4. To begin negotiation processes among public and private decisionmakers to resolve or mitigate problems.

MetroLink anticipated the following specific results:

- An on-site coordinator trained in assessing and gathering information about a metropolitan area's political and economic environments, and in using external networks to bring information and expertise to the area.

- A cadre of leaders with greater understanding of complexities of metropolitan area planning and policymaking processes, and effective strategies for intervening in those processes.

- A process for documenting and assessing cooperative activities among schools, businesses, higher education institutions, and labor organizations, governmental agencies and individuals.

- Tangible examples of results gained from cooperative efforts, visible to the general population.

- A small network capable of disseminating experiences gained through MetroLink to additional metropolitan areas.

Procedures

Selection of Participating Areas. IEL enlarged the originally planned scope of MetroLink by identifying eight geographically diverse metropolitan areas where multi-sector collaborative efforts were being attempted or planned. The communities -- Atlanta, Boston, Hartford, Indianapolis, Louisville, Minneapolis, Saint Louis, and Portland, Oregon -- each had a distinct focus for issues and at least a beginning structure for developing collaborative leadership.

IEL selected the final sites informally, starting with an announcement of the Danforth Foundation grant to its national network, and in the IEL newsletter, and asking leaders in several cities if they were interested in participating. IEL applied five criteria to selection:

1. Geographic diversity;

2. Evidence of commitment of community leadership to developing collaborative solutions to local issues;

3. Assurance from an education agency of involvement in the project;

4. Availability of a coordinator with access to area leaders; where possible, coordinators were established in area organizations which included and fostered multi-sector leadership; and

5. Diversity among sectors/institutions sponsoring MetroLink: business, education and government.

Documentation. IEL contracted with an independent analyst, who was familiar with public-private partnerships and school improvement issues, to develop a framework for documenting MetroLink and to work with the IEL project director in monitoring and documenting the project. Site coordinators modified the framework in light of practical constraints of time required to organize materials and write reports.

It quickly became clear that by and large the site coordinators, and all of whom had full time positions with major responsibilities could not reasonably be expected to gather and analyze information in the many categories outlined in the original documentation plan. IEL decided that coordinators should send documentation whenever possible or convenient, but minimally prior to each meeting for the Coordinators. IEL organized and analyzed the information according to the main themes and issues emerging across programs.

There were four types of documentation:

1. Reports and information exchanged at quarterly meetings among the site coordinators. These meetings were the richest source of information about the process of collaboration within and among the sites. Travel and related expenses were often provided by the coordinators' organizations. Meetings were held in Indianapolis, Atlanta, and Louisville as well as in Washington, D.C. in order to expose coordinators to each others' settings.

2. Documents provided by each coordinator describing or related to site projects. In addition to interim written reports about the progress of collaborative efforts, documents included newspaper articles, memoranda, minutes of meetings, etc.

3. General information relating to all projects, provided by IEL, such as recent national reports, current research papers, expertise provided by IEL specialists.

4. Coordinators' interviews of leaders of local collaboration.

IEL developed the outline and drafts of this report in consultation with the site coordinators.

Decision to Study Existing Programs. IEL decided to investigate existing or newly evolving processes and structures rather that to establish new forums. The first meeting of coordinators took place in December, 1983, in Washington, D.C. The specific focus of activities in Atlanta, Minneapolis and Boston was determined beforehand; the focus and structure for the other sites' project activities took shape during project planning.

The coordinator from each site largely determined his or her project issues, participants, and methods. IEL's decision to build upon existing initiatives and resources for collaboration stressed analysis of behavior in each setting and comparison of contrasting patterns and trends.

The first meeting of coordinators was devoted to developing a sense of "ownership" of the project, agreement about definitions of overall objectives and the role of IEL, and a framework for documentation. The coordinators distinguished their MetroLink role from their normal professional responsibilities. They quickly established rapport, working through questions and concerns openly and easily.

The limited percentage of time available for each coordinator to spend specifically on on-site involvement in the MetroLink project -- on average, about five percent -- emphasized commitment among coordinators to explore the anatomy of collaboration. The coordinators themselves strongly agreed that the successes of their own local efforts to achieve project objectives depended upon their establishing and using their own networks.

The Need for Knowledge about Collaborative Processes

The need for knowledge about the process of collaborative long-range planning has increased significantly in the Eighties. Encouragement of collaborative activity has been a theme of this era of reports and recommendations about the state of the nation's institutions and policies. The reports recognize that our nation's human resources are one variable in the economic equation to which we must pay increasing attention. Most of the reports claim that public-private partnerships are useful vehicles for bringing coherence to fragmented systems and to initiatives for improving the state of education and training at all levels.

Many recommendations reflect the leadership and style of prominent business executives, who by nature speak the language of products and results. The need to understand the process for developing effective and lasting products -- that is, collaborative partnerships -- has been neglected.

This report examines development of multi-sector partnerships as a continuum of five phases. There are two thematic issues. First, how do partnerships move from particular programs to involvement of a whole delivery system? Second, how is consensus developed to improve policymaking and long-range planning?

The analysis of themes, available resources and conditions for collaboration across the eight metropolitan sites is based on the eight case studies which conclude this report.

The case studies should not be regarded as appendices tacked on to the analysis. They comprise the substance of the project. Based on the actual experiences in the eight sites, our fundamental recommendation to metropolitan leaders who are attempting collaboration is threefold, namely:

- To document what is happening,
- To provide opportunities for systemic reflection about the process of collaboration, and
- To strengthen their collective efforts through exchanging information about goals, activities, successful strategies, policy issues, and problems with others engaged in similar initiatives.

There are three reasons why we feel unusually confident about drawing conclusions and indicating directions for metropolitan multi-sector collaboration. First, the central ideas grew from the projects themselves rather than from preconceptions. Second, a MetroLink coordinator worked in each site and had access to central actors in the collaboration. Third, the site coordinators met quarterly to discuss experiences and to exchange ideas and resources. The themes and issues identified by IEL and the MetroLink site coordinators emerged from the discussions at meetings and through the documentation.

Systemic Issues. Metropolitan leaders are increasingly aware of systemic issues in human resource development. They are aware of hundreds of studies about public schooling, higher education, shifting demographic patterns, and future labor market needs. They seek ways to mobilize and direct local leadership, resources and policies toward improving the public schools and increasing youth employment. They are holding conferences to explore how high school graduates can be assured reasonably good chances for employment, and local employers can be assured at the same time that high school graduates will be employable. They are asking where local business and industry will find the labor force to fill rapidly expanding needs, what can be done about the rapid decline in the appeal of higher education to young people?

Because these issues broadly affect organizations, institutions, and individuals throughout the private and public sectors, it seems imperative for leaders to collaborate in addressing common problems. We do not yet know, however, how important such concerns actually are to organizations and institutions which have not cooperated in the past. What would they be willing to sacrifice in order to come to agreement about common interests, goals, and procedures for addressing complex social problems? What are the barriers to collaboration?

There is no shortage of compelling reasons for strategic policymaking among metropolitan community leaders. The statistics alone are as alarming as tabloid headlines:

- Each day forty teenagers give birth to their third child!
- Senior citizens already outnumber teens, and their numbers will continue to increase past the turn of the century.
- In 1950, 17 workers paid the benefits for each retiree, whereas only 3 workers will provide those funds in 1992 -- and one of those will be a minority.

Long-range social issues are especially important in this period when the national mood has shifted away from the social agenda. A number of metropolitan leaders and scholars believe that the American preoccupation with aggressive competition is seriously jeopardizing our sense of community. Some warn that Americans are seriously in danger of isolation from one another and from their social institutions.[1]

One Portland, Oregon leader expressed this idea in an interview:

> *Some of the business leaders...are worried about some young people's lack of academic as well as job skills. I worry more about their lack of values -- traditional American values -- How can we help young people learn that they are a part of a free society; about the value of a free society?*
>
> *Our society does a good job with youth who are aggressive and energetic, but we do not do well with helping them learn sharing and caring. Here we have an opportunity to develop the sense of community*

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[1] *Especially see Bellah, R. and others. Habits of the Heart. Los Angeles: University of California Press. 1985.*

that we need to transmit fundamental values.

The provocative rhetoric of the first prestigious report on the state of public education -- A Nation At Risk -- compared the nation's public schooling system to "an act of war" by a foreign power. Subsequent reports were less strident, but they also blamed the schools for America's economic malaise. There seems to be broad agreement that if our communities fail to develop local capacities for developing the potential of our people, the social and economic prospects for all of us will significantly diminish as we enter the twenty-first century.

Governor James B. Hunt, Jr., speaking for the Task Force on Education for Economic Growth of the Education Commission of the States said, "We have had an abundance of research, a plentiful supply of analysis and an impressive piling up of reports. Public concern is rising. What is needed now is action: action for excellence."

Many reports reinforce and publicize activities that are already in progress by the time they are issued; many school systems were tightening standards at least three years before A Nation At Risk sounded the general alarm, and action had begun in local business communities nationwide well before Governor Hunt spoke. The school reform movement had been stressing testing and regulation of teachers. Communities were shifting public attention toward "excellence." Reports continue to pile up -- so many that a small industry has sprung up to interpret them. One new trend: while College Board and other test scores have risen, the percentage of minorities taking the SAT has declined. Another trend: even though higher percentages of black students have been graduating from high school since 1975, their rates of attending and completing college have declined.

In its report Investing in Our Children: Business in the Public Schools, the Committee for Economic Development recommended increasing funds for school improvement. Why? American has lost its competitive edge in business and industry because its educational standards are low.

The Genesis of MetroLink. Since the turn of the decade, IEL, through its national network of education leaders at all levels, had identified signs of a growing consensus in several metropolitan areas around issues of human resource development. No matter how sincere or ambitious, piecemeal, short-term programs aimed at such problems as conflicting and counterproductive policies, or ineffective deployment of resources generally result in continual frustration. The consensus was that many of the critical issues affecting organizations, institutions and social policies concerning human resources could best be addressed through leaders who collaborate to define mutual objectives and shared strategies, and to share programs and resources.

IEL determined that understanding of processes underlying collaborative leadership is weak in two ways. First, there is little solid analysis -- that is, based on concrete information in specific settings and gathered by informed participants -- about how effective collaboration takes place. Second, there is little acknowledgement of the complexity and difficulty of leadership in collaborative activities.

It is common sense, for example, for urban decisionmakers to integrate programs and policies intended to reduce youth unemployment. Yet the mayor's office, the superintendent of schools, the employment and training administrators, the business leaders and such organizations as the Private Industry Council face classic problems. There are precious few examples in our cities that can be used to guide decisionmaking. It is quickly discovered that the formulation of comprehensive policies is complex. The process involves interconnected factors: demographics, technological change, changing job requirements, data gathering and analysis, overlapping and conflicting incentives and rewards, institutional and organizational friction, to name a few. Furthermore, new proposals are not written on a blank slate. They must be negotiated in the context of existing policies and practices, informal understandings and vested interests. Some of these are governmental, some institutional, some individual.

These observations led to IEL's conclusion that there was a need to study collaboration in specific contexts. Depending on circumstances, different types of leadership may be necessary in order to reach collective agreement about goals and objectives, to identify resources, to determine strategies, to refocus and adjust next steps in light of experience. Leaders may be located at various levels of several sectors, and their talents may come to play at different points during the planning and development of a joint effort. Yet, institutions and organizations rather than individual leaders may be most instrumental in successful collaboration. The effects of joint efforts by representatives of governmental agencies, community-based organizations, educational institutions and corporations may combine to expand and apply strategic thinking. On the other hand, an intermediary person with access to key decisionmakers and the trust of a range of people who influence decisions may be in the ideal position to help translate and synthesize policies at the community level.

What do leaders need to know in order to collaborate effectively and over time? What can be learned from the experience of others? Are there characteristics or critical elements of effective collaboration?

Overview of Collaborative Metropolitan Leadership in the Eighties

The State of the Art. Reverend Sullivan's parable about the boy trapped in a hole, cited in the introduction, is even more persuasive nearly a decade later. Some 200 state committees and commissions, public and private, agree that there is a national crisis in public education. Many other organizations are attempting to deal with youth unemployment and related problems.

It is not entirely facetious to observe that the energy, time and talent that have been expended in analysis and exhortation about improving the state of employment, public schooling, higher education and training could keep hot air balloons afloat over major metropolitan areas coast to coast.

When the MetroLink coordinators explored this comparison in depth, they agreed that at least the image of hot air balloons shifts the analogy from the negative image of a deep hole to the sky above -- a sign of hope that some progress has occurred. At the same time, "hot air" suggests that there is less to many partnerships than meets the eye.

These balloons -- of varied sizes, colors and durability -- may be analogous to partnerships. Some of them are flimsy, temporary confections to decorate the horizon. Yet a closer look reveals that a few of them have evolved into something extraordinary. They are not hot air balloons at all, but transport dirigibles -- substantial, hardy vehicles capable of carrying weighty and massive burdens, reliably and over time, to serve a metropolitan area.

John McPhee describes some actual lighter-than-air vehicles in The Deltoid Pumpkin Seed. He tells a story of a few dedicated amateur and professional engineers, who started with model planes and makeshift wind tunnels, often sacrificing their own money, time and other resources, and designed and demonstrated with innovative technology a dirigible shaped like a pumpkin seed. McPhee concludes that if it were implemented on a large scale, the invention would be capable of sustaining more cost-effective regional and national air transportation system than anything that exists.

Like lighter-than-air technology, public-private partnerships have significant potential applications, but their full development depends on the sustained commitment of knowledgeable, dedicated leaders, together with a collective will to make significant changes in the usual way of doing business, even if that entails sacrifice, inconvenience and discomfort.

The concept of genuine give-and-take partnerships is experimental -- a trial balloon. The growing consensus among reports from various public and private sector leaders -- that local community leaders nationwide must collaborate as partners willing to sacrifice turf, power, and visibility to achieve a common overarching goal -- remains generally untested.

Partnerships are a First Step. Multi-sector partnerships are among the first highly visible structures for collaborative effort. Partnerships have been constructed between schools and companies, school systems and organizations of corporations, and they often embrace governmental agencies, private non-profit organizations, religious institutions, colleges and universities, and community based organizations for training and employment. Whether they are intended to improve public schools, provide employment and training for youth or address problems of housing and crime, partnerships offer a way for public and private sector leaders from different organizations and institutions to view community problems collectively and with an unusual perspective, high above the terrain.

Many if not most partnerships are in the "balloon" stage. This stage involves many people joining together, contributing their knowledge, experience, cooperation and mutual trust and commitment. Launching and guiding balloons requires teamwork, hard work and courage. What's more, the hot-air balloons of today are fairly sophisticated -- far safer than they look; there are few disasters. They are an excellent way to uplift spirits for a while, especially when the outcome of the exercise is a highly visible event -- a bright and colorful, sometimes exhilirating demonstration of what people can accomplish together.

Attractive as some of these contraptions are, though, they cannot yet carry much more burden than the participants themselves. Designed for short excursions rather than long hauls, they are fragile and hard to manage in a breeze. A gust can push them miles off course. Apart from recreation they are useful mainly for publicity and advertising. In order to improve the capacity, power, stability and steering mechanism of these vehicles to achieve different and more ambitious goals, people must combine efforts, enlist help from others, commit resources and apply special expertise and knowledge from outside sources.

Likewise, multi-sector partnerships are intended for no less than developing, marshalling and deploying human resources long-range -- resources capable of meeting the changing economic, social and political needs of metropolitan communities. Among the persistent and urgent issues that they must address through local action are youth unemployment, long-lasting employability of non-college-bound high school graduates, and improvement of public schooling at all grade levels.

The debates surrounding numerous educational standards, commitment to more resources to public education, and innumerable measures are healthy and important. These debates highlight the need to take action, to invest in our children, to develop our human resources. It is useful to critique as well as to promote multi-sector partnerships -- to know the size, shapes and strengths of the balloons, to know which way the wind is blowing, and applaud promising experiments.

IEL undertook MetroLink in the belief that it is not enough to take action -- whether for excellence, for equity, or for both -- or to increase investments to improve public education. Improved strategic thinking and concerted action depends on understanding of how collaboration takes place. The fundamental need is therefore to improve our understanding of how our metropolitan communities develop collaborative leadership. After two years of operation, MetroLink has shown that reliable, efficient vehicles for developing human resources may be feasible for all metropolitan areas.

What is Collaboration?

MetroLink Coordinators tended to spend little time defining terms. They agreed that it is most useful to think about collaboration as a continuum, and that progress along that continuum occurs in phases.

The definition of what metropolitan area activities are meaningful or substantive varies according to the phase of development. Factors affecting the phase include the history of inter-sector cooperation in the area: political, cultural, economic circumstances; community expectations; leadership available in the relevant organizations and institutions; and the number and importance of factors that distract attention from collaboration. The urgency of problems creates pressure for collaboration; if the problems are not severe, the community may be inclined to maintain the status quo; yet if they are too severe, a climate of crisis and distrust many inhibit creative discussion.

The experiences of the coordinators in the eight projects within MetroLink indicate five phases of collaboration for metropolitan human resource development.

Phase One: Community Leaders from different sectors agree upon a need to collaborate and create a structure for action.

Many metropolitan communities are familiar with this phase, which entails initiatives by local political leaders, business leaders, and top-level educational administrators and boards. While the public may be only marginally aware of the first part of this phase, the structure for action is often well-publicized . It may be the formation of an office to coordinate school-business partnerships or an adopt-a-school program, it may be a statement of new goals for a prominent existing organization, or it may be a new entity.

- The Saint Louis public schools have participated in numerous work-study programs, including classes conducted on site in companies, since the late sixties. The Chamber of Commerce, using seed money provided by the Danforth Foundation, enlisted cooperation between the schools and the local business community, using Ralston Purina as the lead company.

- In 1975 the Hartford superintendent of schools asked the Chamber of Commerce to help the school system prepare youth for local jobs. The Chamber offered to pay half of the salary of a coordinator to create a plan linking schools and the business community. In 1981 the Chamber organized a School-Business Collaborative including the deputy superintendent of schools, school principals, directors of the Urban League and the Puerto Rican Forum. The goals of these efforts were to raise the academic achievement, improve employability and reduce school dropout rates.

- Atlanta's formal organization of partnerships can be traced to 1974-1975, when the business community first approached the school system. As recently as 1973, the habits of segregation were strong: there were separate Parent--Teacher Association councils for blacks and whites, even though the two groups had merged at the state level. Meetings held throughout Atlanta to survey public opinion about the school system involved over 10,000 citizens, who collectively suggested priorities that included basic academic skills, career education and job placement, and improved communication throughout the school system and with the public. In August, 1980, when Superintendent Alonzo Crim announced the systemwide goal that every student would achieve the national norm in literacy skills by 1985, with 20 percent of the gain to be realized in the 1980-81 school year, he established the terms for long-term multi-sector collaboration: the educational goals could not be achieved without support and cooperation of all groups in the community. He also enlisted executives of all the major media organizations in Atlanta to help him inform and involve the public in his plans, and began to involve deans of schools of education to plan staff development programs. The formal structure for collaboration among the schools, higher education and the business community was created in January, 1981 -- the Atlanta Partnership of Business and Education, Inc.

- In December, 1983, Indianapolis community leaders, under the auspices of the Greater Indianapolis Progress Committee, created a Subcommittee for the Employment Opportunities Task Force, whose purpose was to begin working on the problem of enlisting the business community to provide summer jobs for disadvantaged youth. The mission statement emphasized that its task was greater than the immediate challenge of identifying jobs for the coming summer. It was to "develop an apparatus that will maximize employment opportunities for youth...in 1984 and future years." Representatives from the Private Industry Council and the school system, City of Indianapolis and the Chamber of Commerce agreed that the roles described in the concept paper were acceptable to each organization.

Phase Two: **Leaders' commitment becomes visible as multi-sector activities, short-term and long-term, are publicized. Depending on circumstances, public awareness of their commitment may grow swiftly, or it may take years to develop.**

- In past Saint Louis multi-sector programs, Ralston Purina provided classroom space and equipment, matching students screened by the school system to training supervisors for clerical positions, data processing, printing and other jobs. The Board of Education assigned and paid certified teachers to teach academic and business courses on company premises. A consortium of 10 banks offered training in entry level positions; service stations offered automobile service training in trailers located at the stations; city hall coordinated positions in government agencies.

- In Hartford, the result of the planning effort jointly funded by the Board of Education and the Chamber was Workplaces, an alternative careers high school program for grades 10-12, where young people could develop marketable skills, have work experiences, career development and remediation programs along with their academic program. Workplaces conducted eight demonstration projects funded by the Department of Labor's CETA youth titles in 1980.

- Among several initiatives in Atlanta, Adopt-A-School has provided a broad range of activities enabling people in all sectors, including small and large companies, religious organizations, and cultural agencies, to help the schools. Religious, business and community leaders have not suggested that they are content that these activities will accomplish the ambitious goals of the community. Leaders have made it clear that their aim is not merely to tinker with the school system. Specifically, business leaders were asked to clarify their standards of employability, and the school system committed itself to meeting those standards regardless of race, poverty or other circumstances.

Phase Three: **Leaders agree that collaboration must confront long-range systemic problems, and they identify barriers to further collaboration.**

- In 1984 the leaders of the Atlanta Partnership could have rested on their laurels, a well-deserved reputation as a national prototype of cooperation. They openly acknowledged, however, that they were struggling with several problems. The most obvious was that the strength and reputation of the Partnership apparently depended upon its major leaders. In the eyes of the public, the Partnership was those leaders, most notably Superintendent Crim. The Partnership, partly to establish a separate identity, moved its office to the Georgia State University campus.

Partnership leaders had identified at least three other barriers as well: First, teachers, parents and others at the grassroots level were relatively inactive in the Partnership. Second, the potential worth and specific aims of the Partnership were not apparent to people in parts of the community who should actively feel a major stake in its work -- the low income black community, which comprises the great majority of the school population. Third, the Partnership had made little headway in its promise to improve staff development in the school system.

o Leaders in Portland, Oregon, attempting to reduce the high rate of youth unemployment, particularly minority youth unemployment, had consolidated several major political and economic segments of the metropolitan area. The agreement included the city government, the school district and the Chamber of Commerce, along with the local Urban League. A consortium of these groups was approved for participation in the Urban Network Project of Brandeis University, which links multi-sector youth employment collaborative projects in several urban areas across the country. The Project combined resources for improving existing in-school programs of work experience, career education, pre-employment skill development and job placement.

The city, school district and Chamber of Commerce designed a policy committee at the start of MetroLink in Portland called the Leaders Roundtable, composed of decision-makers from all major segments of the community, including the mayor, the superintendent of schools, the vice chairman of U.S. Bancorp and others, who spearheaded the business community efforts. Their common purpose was to coordinate and synthesize policy development around youth employability and employment. The Leaders' Roundtable strategy was and is to bring freshness of thought to the issues, coupled with an ability to make decisions -- to act. A coordinating group of staff was established to solve problems and set agendas.

The Roundtable is stimulating a broadening of collaboration in two ways -- first, by including many additional segments of the community in a planning process; second, by creating a means of accountability among all the participating partners. They must define their relationships clearly, making distinct, "who does what, who provides what resources." A business leader on the Roundtable said:

> *Business will supply more opportunities and will show more care in what it does so as to fit in the overall plan and not waste resources. Public institutions will better define what they do. They will also be better able to assign their resources. The PIC should be in a better position to serve the private sector.. [to] serve their goals and legislative mandates [and] make a greater commitment to the in-school population...we should see more coordination within the schools.*

Phase Four: Leaders and their constituents sacrifice "turf", authority/power, resources, status, priorities and traditions in order to overcome barriers to collaboration.

The people designated to lead a collaborative effort are tied to their roles in specific organizations as well as to their overarching roles in addressing social and economic dilemmas. Their responsibilities include helping others to transcend their habitual, parochial loyalties. The occasions that force these leaders to set aside their usual loyalties in order to carry out their transcendent roles subject them to stress. Collaboration in which participants are able to withstand significant conflict between these roles has reached an advanced level of development.

- The Portland, Oregon 15-member Leaders Roundtable had reached some particularly significant and hard-earned gains in coming to agreement around ways to address several issues, when unexpectedly, in May of 1984, Portland unseated its mayor. It is a tribute both to the incumbent outgoing Mayor and to the then Mayor-elect, J.E. "Bud" Clark, that Clark's transition to the Leaders Roundtable was both smooth and immediate. It also confirms the commitment among all major participants in the metropolitan area to put aside short-term conflicts and tensions in order to facilitate movement toward long-term goals and objectives. If Mayor Ivancie had insisted upon his prerogatives as incumbent Mayor to participate on the Roundtable until the moment he had to leave office, or had Mr. Clark sought to reject or undermine the Leaders Roundtable, years of progress would have been undone.

- Hartford's School-Business Collaborative had lost momentum as leaders in all sectors had difficulty reaching common agreement about how to improve the transition from public school to long-term employment, and about what the role of the School-Business Collaborative should be.

  An informal consensus of the Hartford business community held that a top community priority must be to restore employers' confidence in the Hartford Public Schools diploma as a reliable measure of employability. Effective collaboration between business and educational leaders required that they reach general agreement about some minimal levels of competencies of graduates that the business community would accept, and that the schools could reasonably guarantee.

  While all parties agreed that a high school diploma did not assure that a graduate was "ready for work," a major obstacle arose around the issue of testing in the School-to-Work Transition Project, a joint effort of the Hartford Public Schools and the School-Business Collaborative undertaken during the MetroLink project. Much suspicion and misunderstanding between the business community and school people had subsided under the Collaborative, because the project brought curriculum staff from the school system together with business representatives, but basically to do things that did not cause discomfort for either party. Nonetheless, the Chamber of Commerce, the Private Industry Council and the Superintendent of Schools held opposing views that recalled ancient battles. Educators felt that the schools are being unfairly blamed for not having taught students the skills for success in the world of work. Private sector representatives felt that schools resist change so strongly that no progress can occur without sustained and intensive external pressure.

Should seniors be required to take an "exit" test of basic skills? Could a test for employability become, in effect, an "exit" test? What level of test performance is reasonable to demand of a school system whose graduates are largely poor minorities, whose first language in many cases is not English?

The emotional and value-laden issues could be resolved only through extended mediation behind closed doors. Building on its recent achievements within the Collaborative, the group was able to create its eventual compromise document establishing the expectation of an eighth grade level of academic skill. They succeeded primarily because all participants realized that they were obliged to resolve their differences or else reach a permanent impasse. They knew that such a standoff would have been disastrous for the business community and the education community alike.

Phase Five: **Long-range commitment of persons in leadership positions is assured, and authoritative structures for collaborative decisionmaking for long-range collaboration are securely established.**

Risky as it is to state that a community has created structures and processes that assure ongoing collaboration, it is clear that the efforts in some of the MetroLink communities will continue and will probably improve over time. The most straightforward example is the Indianapolis partnership, which developed Partners 2000. The strength of the partnership has grown rapidly and steadily in the past two years. In 1985 it placed well over 3,000 disadvantaged young people in summer job experiences, a major increase in private sector participation. The working relationships among the schools, the City and the private sector are strong. The most significant success story: virtually every eligible young person in Marion County signed up for the program, and in fact, was placed in a summer job experience.

Planning for the 1986 program has already begun among the Chamber of Commerce, the Progress Committee, the Private Industry Council, the Alliance for Jobs and the City. Integration of operations of JobNet (volunteer effort to recruit private sector jobs) with the Alliance for Jobs has also begun. Finally, the consultants for the program are packaging the programs in the form of "JobNet U.S.A." -- a for-profit venture endorsed by the major participants in the Indianapolis program -- to market the successes in other cities attempting to launch improved summer youth employment programs.

COMPARISONS AND CONTRASTS: ANALYSIS OF CHARACTERISTICS ACROSS SITES

The metropolitan areas in MetroLink offer many similarities and differences among barriers to collaboration, opportunities for multi-sector activities, planning structures, leadership persons, the business and education/training communities, and relationships among public, private and non-profit sectors.

The following working definitions serve as a framework for considering comparisons and contrasts across the eight sites:

Metropolitan: pertaining to actual and potential resources of education, training, and employment of any region surrounding a large core city, and therefore not confined within a conventional political, legislated or geographic boundaries.

Human Resources: People, including children and youth, currently residing in a metropolitan region, and those who will be entering the region or may be attracted to it, who are capable of contributing to the economic, cultural and social well-being of the metropolitan community. This definition emphasizes that long-range planning must consider demographic projections.

Development: The process of providing access to and use of resources in education, training and/or employment in a metropolitan community; of learning new skills, information and competencies which increase the economic and social choices available to individuals, groups and organizations; and of building capacities among individuals, groups and organizations to contribute to the community.

Collaboration: The process by which two or more different kinds of individuals and/or groups cooperate in activities for mutual benefit. Collaboration requires sustained joint commitments to accomodate to different ways of working and communicating, and often to contrasting sets of values in creating productive methods for accomplishing common goals.

Partnership: An agreement among representative decision-makers in organizations belonging to different economic sectors (public and private profit/non-profit) to cooperate for mutual benefit. The Committee for Economic Development notes two dimensions for cooperation: policy, in which goals of the community are articulated; and operational, in which goals are carried out. "The purpose of public-private partnership is to link these dimensions in such a way that the participants contribute to the benefit of the broader community while promoting their own individual or organizational interest."[2]

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[2]. Public-Private Partnership: An Opportunity for Urban Communities, (Committee for Economic Development [CED], New York, Washington, February 1982), p. 2. The Appendix, pp. 104 and 105, emphasizes political interdependence between sectors, versus conventionsl views that the public sector is primarily a support function for the private sector or that the private sector is a homogenous grouping of profit-making organizations. Non-profit and voluntary private sector actions also have an important public dimension.

Process Themes: Resources and Conditions for Metropolitan Cross-Sector Collaboration

MetroLink coordinators' reflections about a range of issues and trends arising from their projects clustered around twelve themes:

Theme # 1 **Inter-sector collaboration is a process. Although processes used to achieve similar aims may result in similar structures and methods, genuine collaboration cannot be bottled for replication, codified into formulas or mechanical procedures.**

MetroLink coordinators feel strongly that collaboration evolved in very distinct ways peculiar to the political, economic, demographic and institutional circumstances, individuals, and changing events in each of their metropolitan regions. Common elements appeared across sites; similar aims and methods used were the result of parallel processes. Structures, policies, and compromises have begun to converge in each site as participants devise ways to create, for example, comprehensive long-term employment systems for youth.

Exchanges of information and materials among MetroLink coordinators often stressed generic resemblances among project components, but collaboration resists being reduced to a replicable formula. Coordinators agreed that a systematic approach to collaboration -- a way to manufacture rather than grow the solutions to long-range metropolitan problems -- is simplistic, short-sighted and mechanical. In contrast, a systemic approach to collaboration will acknowledge the complexities of institutional change, will be long-range, and will of necessity focus upon the extensive political and social negotiations required to address persistent issues.

Theme # 2 **Many motivations combine to stimulate cross-sector cooperative activities. They reflect needs, expectations, and perceived self-interests. People and institutions are moved to collaborate by a common view of an important perceived need. It is when major participants have a common interest or goal and are struggling hard to overcome barriers to achieving the goal that collaboration is most likely to bring progress toward durable consensus for action.**

Unless there is a commonly perceived need, little can be done to stimulate collaborative activity. It is not difficult for most urban areas to find some opportunities for cooperative projects involving different sectors, but these are often superficial. But if participants are seriously committed to addressing long-term social issues in their community, they must be prepared to sacrifice cherished traditions such as access, power and information.

When a partnership is consistently portrayed as free of significant problems or tensions, it is probably superficial. A partnership that seems stymied by dilemmas, but that grapples with resistance among individuals and organizations, and shifting perceptions among its participants may be genuinely struggling to overcome personal and institutional obstacles to collaborative effort.

One conventional response to major institutional obstacles is, "it can't be done" because of vested interests, political, social, cultural and economic problems to become. A related response to public pressure for action is public relations exercises in the name of partnership. Such exercises can be easily recognized by their excessive rhetoric, lack of challenging goals and insubstantial achievements in the face of the problems that they are supposed to address.

The difficulties that participants must work through in resolving issues of collaboration -- the tough job of hammering out new working relationships among individuals, organizations and institutions -- are rarely made public.

Theme #3 **It is critically important to maintain as many of the elements needed in the infrastructure of metropolitan collaboration as possible.**

At times, publicly visible results may be disappointing, and collaboration may appear to be moribund; nevertheless, holding potential pieces of a comprehensive system in place for the future is important.

The generalized iceburg theory -- that seven eighths of everything can't be seen -- definitely applies to collaboration. The publicly visible outcomes of effective collaboration occur at the end of the process. Although many necessary ingredients of effective collaboration may be present, various circumstances -- lack of leadership, political events -- may hinder the momentum for collaboration for a period.

Yet this does not mean that collaboration is not happening or that structures designed to stimulate joint efforts should be dismantled because they are not achieving an immediate goal. To the contrary, they should be maintained so that they will be available when they are needed. When the right elements are finally present -- a change of leaders, a change of attitude -- collaboration will proceed.

The mix of factors affecting the equilibrium of power, influence, funding, visibility, and other characteristics of metropolitan community groups is increasingly complex. The mix also changes frequently. Many forces affect change and stability -- political, demographic, institutional, individual, systemic, accidental.

Theme #4 **Like it or not, events of the "real world" are bound to affect structures, goals objectives and processes of collaboration, positively and negatively. In order to weather these events, those who facilitate efforts around human resource development must maintain a range of strategies and tactics for communication, problem-solving and focusing attention on long-range aims.**

Sometimes unforseen events can delay, even wreck the progress of well-planned collaborative efforts. As we have seen, the selection of the new mayor could have scotched the city's participation on the Leaders Roundtable in Portland. For reasons no one can fathom, a key decisionmaker or organization may decide to stand pat, or change priorities. In the case of Minneapolis, an external event may distract the community -- the threat of a proposed $1.3 billion "Mega-Mall" to be built outside the city.

Any number of events, large and small, are capable of distracting attention from the long-range aims of collaboration -- for example, the temporary imperatives of local government, the crises that grab local headlines, the whims of political leaders, national events, changing personal priorities of key decision-makers. A group or individuals must be willing and able to maintain the course of collaborative efforts.

Theme #5 **Collaboration changes participants' viewpoints about the roles, functions and capacities of other groups and individuals during the process.**

Collaboration requires all parties to realize and accept that there may be several issues of genuine mutual concern, and to work toward resolving them. Nevertheless, they cannot reasonably be expected to concur about these issues most of the time. Therefore, in order to succeed in reaching consensus about collaboration, the parties must engage in a process that fosters acceptance of differences (agreeing to disagree) and tolerance for a wide range of acceptable compromises.

Participants must be able to fashion a goal that all can find a way to agree upon. That is, they must invest energy in finding a legitimate common goal, not in disagreeing that one ought to be found.

IEL's conception of MetroLink was to explore broad issues and strategies of collaboration which might not have a programmatic goal, but which would require changes in the ways that leaders relate to one another, define and perceive their aims and methods. Successful collaboration therefore might not result in everyone implementing a specific project; instead, it would probably result in rethinking goals or finding ways to do a job better. The main feature of collaboration is that key participants change the ways that they perceive and behave toward one another and the environment. As they attempt to design ways of responding to needs for collective well-being, they constantly redefine the terms of their agreements in order to reflect their growing understanding of mutual interests and goals.

Theme #6 **Intermediary groups and individuals can facilitate multi-sector collaboration without always being in politically neutral organizations or positions. They can be effective if they are trusted by key participants to promote collaboration rather than institutional or organizational vested interests.**

MetroLink site coordinators often served in this role. Two coordinators who were formally affiliated with school systems or universities noted that they did not view themselves as sharing the vested interests of their institutions. Some were not generally perceived as partisan, whether -- representing the "higher education establishment," the mayor, or the superintendent of schools. One coordinator reported never feeling a sense of "territoriality" when exploring a topic of general community concern.

Atlanta and Hartford illustrated this theme repeatedly. The MetroLink coordinator in Atlanta is an employee of Georgia State University, but in his work with the Atlanta Partnership he has never been identified primarily with the University, for example, in his developing the Principals' Institute. On the other hand, it was extremely important to locate the Partnership office at the University in order to stress that it was not controlled by the business community or the school system.

The Hartford MetroLink coordinator came directly from the business community, to the Chamber of Commerce, yet she constantly mediates between the major representatives of the school system and business leaders. Her work in reconstituting the School-Business Collaborative involved as much informal negotiations with business people as with school people. Her role as Vice President of Human Resource Development within the Greater Hartford Chamber of Commerce requires that she maintain a multi-sector perspective. If she were to adopt a conventional "business" perspective she would never be able to understand, much less sympathize with the school system. A telling example: the employment specialists working in the schools with the School-To-Work Transition Project were hired by and are responsible to her.

Theme # 7 **Facilitators of collaboration need and benefit from opportunities to communicate across projects and to reflect upon the experience of others in similar or contrasting situations. They learn from each other.**

This is a significant need met by MetroLink, especially evident in each of the quarterly meetings among site coordinators. The coordinators repeatedly stated that they had shared specific information -- for example, instruments and methods of tracking the employment history of recent high school graduates -- and had identified other resources that were useful to them. Business representatives from one site visited another. The site coordinators stated that the opportunities to reflect upon the implications of similar patterns and experiences of collaboration in other sites was invaluable in two ways. First. people who have the special roles and responsibilities of the MetroLink coordinators -- strategic fostering and monitoring of metropolitan collaboration -- are not only unusual, but they rarely have the chance to exchange views, deliberately to step back from what they are doing and attempt to understand it in a larger context. Second, because the coordinators occupied other roles practically 95 percent of their time, the main occasions they had to focus their attention for a while not on the details of collaborative activities but on the process of collaboration itself were the MetroLink documentation assignments and meetings.

One coordinator explained the importance of MetroLink as a "resource for information, materials and for people resources;...and equally important, as a reflection of the views of other sectors of the community, even though each city is unique in its make-up and chemistry." In addition, "coordinators can't 'connect' without personal contact with the other coordinators," and "even though local styles and project goals are very different, there are a lot of questions [to] be discussed together." For example, in determining the degree of participation required by those in a partnership, "How do we get rid of token efforts without alienating the participants? Should schools be the sole judge of what curricula are appropriate? Are there necessarily built-in biases of education presented by the business community?"

Coordinators were also able to observe commonalities among projects and to draw implications from their own efforts. The Saint Louis coordinator, for example, benefitted enormously from exposure to the Atlanta Partnership and the Hartford School-Business Collaborative.

In addition, comparisons and contrasts among projects became increasingly well-defined as ideas and experiences are exchanged. To name only a few:

- The importance of a top-level leader whose attention and concern are focused on the central issues for collaboration: When the contact in the Saint Paul Mayor's office left for another position, there was no one available to maintain interest in the project. When the leadership of the Saint Louis Civic Progress group changed, so did the priority.
- The kinds of people involved in collaboration are more important then their positions. However, the people must also be capable of making decisions or have quick and reliable access to key decisionmakers. The chemistry among these people, who are often powerful and charismatic, is critically important and must be nurtured. Therefore, for example, it will not do to send substitutes no matter how capable, to important collaborative meetings.
- In addition to the key decisionmaking participants in collaboration, there must be people skillful in handling logistics and tasks for carrying out the ideas of higher level decisionmakers -- people who understand the dynamics of collaboration, who take care of interruptions, who set climates that allow others to work well together.

Theme #8 **A "culture of collaboration" -- special ways of communicating, especially through widely-recognized and respected informal channels -- evolves during a project. Participants develop special ways of communicating, a history of relationships, and informal understandings that respect but extend beyond their formal roles and functions.**

Collaboration among people and institutions is a function of the personalities of the actors, and political opportunism, as well as common recognition of long-range community needs.

Portland, Atlanta and Indianapolis illustrate how distinct habits, expectations and special relationships have developed.

Clear criteria for membership in the Portland Leaders Roundtable have developed in order to assure that members' actions will have maximum influence on community policies and institutional practices. A central tenet of the Portland Roundtable has been that the interaction of the powerful actors engaged in collaboration will largely determine the direction of collaboration. Because the Roundtable is intended to promote fast action when it is desired, decisionmaking power is essential for membership and attendance. Consequently, members may not designate staff to attend in their place. Similarly, a person is not automatically entitled to membership in the Roundtable solely by virtue of his or her title.

In Atlanta, Superintendent Crim holds an informal breakfast meeting each month. Participants share and freely explore a range of concerns and interests. It is a critically important means of maintaining informal lines of communication between educational, business, religious and political leaders.

For the past two years in Indianapolis, major collaboration around youth concerns has consisted of bringing together business, civic, political, school system, and community leaders around the issue of employing disadvantaged youth aged 14-21 in Marion County, the Indianapolis Metropolitan area. The collaborative effort, Partners 2000, focused on summer jobs for youth, but the structure for collaborative activities was largely informal. The coalition was not operated by one organization or identified with one group. Informally, the Greater Indianapolis Progress Committee (GIPC) -- the private sector advisory arm to the Mayor's office -- functioned as an intermediary. GIPC has been called the "glue" for the collaborative endeavor.

Theme #9 **Multi-sector partnerships respond to the new politics of education created by the federal government's exit from the educational scene. Shifts in roles of state legislatures and education agencies have strongly affected metropolitan area priorities in human resource development.**

In Louisville, private sector resources are supplanting government largesse. Corporations are currently playing a significant role in providing computer education. Computers have proliferated throughout the schools because local firms have contributed equipment and funds. A statewide conference to promote partnerships between local public schools and community organizations and groups emphasized compensation for the lack of federal resources through creating links with community businesses and agencies. State legislation in Kentucky supporting the development of school-community partnerships reflects local efforts to create new sources of support for local public schools.

In Portland and Hartford, the Private Industry Council's (PICs) remain the only significant source of funding for employment and training of the economically disadvantaged. These Councils, originally formed under Title VII of CETA, have become the conduit for funding from the Jobs Training Partnership Act, but without collaboration with other institutions and organizations dealing with youth employment they merely contribute to fragmentation of policies and services. In both cities, the roles and resources of the PICs have affected and been influenced by collaborative activities. The unanimous approval by the Portland City Council of a collaborative decision to consolidate and assign to the PIC hundreds of thousands of local dollars in summer youth employment and training funds illustrates how collaboration has changed local priorities in funding patterns.

Initially the Saint Louis project attempted through a local Member of the House of Representatives to have someone from the Department of Education visit Saint Louis to speak about the implications of A Nation At Risk. Far more significant than that kind of activity, however, have been visits to the Missouri State Department of Education to acquaint business and other leaders with the nature and significance of state policymaking on local educational policies and practices.

Atlanta's Principals' Institute offers another illustration of a local response to a problem whose most immediate solutions would previously have been sought through federal funds. The Atlanta Partnership itself has grown in large part because of increased awareness among local leaders that resources for addressing the region's problems are indeed finite, and that there is little that can be expected in federal funds for new initiatives. As Superintendent Crim expressed it:

> *Collaboration is going to be of paramount importance in the next five to ten years. The Atlanta Regional Commission indicates that human needs in the metro area are increasing geometrically whiles resources are increasing linearly. The only solution is for collaboration of both public and private resources.*

Theme #10 **Access to reliable information and the reporting of data are fast becoming critical issues for collaboration. Data about education/training institutions, practices and results are not politically neutral. They are often controversial, and their collection and dissemination may have many unexpected effects.**

Collaborators need to analyze the possible consequences of disseminating data-based information and think through the conditions for effective collaborative decisionmaking. Data-gathering and decision-making must be undertaken by the right individuals and organizations, shared among participants and with the public at the right times, and by the right people.

What groups need what kind of information? For what purposes? How essential for decisions about education and training -- policies and practices -- are specific kinds of data? Who gathers, shapes, interprets and reports data?

Such questions are critically important. For example, what political credibility is at stake for school people in researching post-high school unemployment rates of graduates and dropouts? When and in what form should research outcomes be publicized?

MetroLink coordinators found that one major task in collaborative efforts appears to be the development of compatible systems of gathering and sharing information -- systems that effectively communicate to all sectors.

This theme has been insistent throughout the Hartford project. It reflects the fundamental tension at the heart of the collaborative process involving the school system and other organizations and institutions concerned with youth employability. Is insistence on confidentiality of all data about students simply an exercise of educational and administrative responsibility consistent with the spirit as well as the letter of the Buckley Amendment? When does it become a gatekeeper's tool to defend turf?

Hartford officials found that the best source of information leading to data essential for tracking the employment records of high school graduates turned out to be classmates. They could track down former students through the grapevine much faster and more reliably than others could through institutional channels. This illustrated once again how important interpersonal trust is in achieving results involving potentially sensitive information.

Theme # 11 **Collaboration is affected by a community's "social memories" -- of politically traumatic events, of controversial, powerful or widely-trusted and influential organizations, institutions, individuals and groups. These shared memories constitute positive and negative community perceptions of capacities and trustworthiness which stimulate or present barriers to multi-sector consensus about goals, objectives, participants and activities.**

It has taken one MetroLink community over five years to recover from the turmoil surrounding the office of superintendent of schools so that the school system is perceived as stable. Conversely, another MetroLink community has enjoyed such a reputation for stable urban institutions of relatively high quality that it often seems difficult to mount a case that there are problems serious and pervasive enough to warrant concerted metropolitan efforts to solve them. Still another MetroLink community has so increased public confidence in its leaders over the past several years that occasional social turmoil is seen as an aberration.

Communities, through persons in opinion-setting positions, retain memories that often span several decades. Past failures, old agendas, and ancient hurts are easily resurrected. It is an almost universal defense mechanism for leaders to call up previous trouble spots when new ventures are suggested. This history must be dealt with before new processes can be developed with widespread support.

Theme #12 **In order to pursue long-range goals over time, multi-sector collaborators must gradually cease to depend greatly upon individual leaders and must broaden the capacity and share legitimacy among organizations and institutions for assuming leadership and taking action to solve problems.**

To "institutionalize" seems like such an attractive catch-all solution, practically eliminating the messy complexities of personalities, turf, shifting political agendas and changes in leadership. The term implies that once a special organization such as the Atlanta Partnership or Hartford's School/Business Collaborative (SBC) or Portland's Leaders Roundtable is created to sponsor and coordinate collaboration, the most intractable problems will be over. Leaders interviewed in Saint Louis reflect this view. They claim that a well--established and respected institution designed to foster collaborative activities would reduce institutional battles over "turf" and would reduce the effects of unpredictable personalities and political agendas of various leaders. The view is that "function follows form" -- that is, if the institution for collaboration is well established, the rest will follow.

While such an institution may serve this purpose admirably, development of a formal umbrella structure responsible for multi-sector activities is not necessarily effective. Such a structure might even inhibit collaboration if it were not fully recognized among all participants as legitimate and effective -- an adequate and desirable replacement of individually powerful or influential leaders. The first attempt to create an umbrella structure for mobilizing Hartford's community leaders -- the School-Business Collaborative -- was established precisely to stimulate and oversee multi-sector collaboration. When it failed to realize its early promise among Hartford's business and community leaders, it had to be reconstituted.

Perhaps the greatest attraction of institutionalization is stability of leadership. Participants in collaboration must constantly deal with the anxiety of whether a change of leaders would mean that their accomplishments would collapse.

No one in Atlanta likes to contemplate what might happen if Alonzo Crim leaves in the near future, yet the Partnership may well be strong enough to sustain its influence without Crim. As Portland's Leaders Roundtable illustrated in its smooth management of an abrupt transition of mayors, commitment to structures for collaboration can help them prove to be very resilient.

Future Possibilities

The possibilities for stimulating collaboration in these and other metropolitan areas around issues of human resource development are plentiful enough that communities can take advantage of a number of opportunities as they arise. Resources within and outside of MetroLink are evident and can be enlisted to assist the development of collaborative enterprises whenever appropriate.

The MetroLink project created a national network of coordinators whose knowledge of issues and processes of collaboration is combined with first-hand experience with specific efforts conducted over a period of two years. This network is already tied to other networks concerned with similar policy issues, efforts to overcome barriers to cooperation, and potential sources of metropolitan leadership.

Characteristics and conditions for nurturing and supporting leadership have been identified and developed among the eight sites. Networking, building skills for change agents, and other processes have also been developed and examined regularly through IEL.

One of the main lessons of MetroLink has been that it is practically invaluable to simply gather a number of people who are engaged in continuing efforts to collaborate so that they can exchange ideas and resources, and discuss the process. The opportunity to step back, to reflect on what is happening along with others who are undergoing similar experiences afforded the Coordinators special perspectives that they could and will continue to use.

It is clear that a wide variety of leaders also would benefit from opportunities to exchange ideas, strategies and resources with peers. It is especially noteworthy that the percentage of time that MetroLink site coordinators devoted to this work was extremely small in relation to its potential effect.

National attention has been focusing intensively for at least two years on the policy issues surrounding human resource development. Our understanding of collaboration as an extraordinarily effective and probably most cost-effective means of addressing long-range social issues has improved. The most encouraging news is that an enormous amount of collaborative activity is going on at different levels. Even in places where collaboration is not readily apparent, many resources and potential leaders of effective activities are in place.

We know a great deal now about the skills that promote desirable change in institutions that as recently as a decade ago seemed impervious to reform -- notably school systems, employment and training agencies, and entrenched political structures. In many instances where collaboration has not yet accomplished visible systemic change, essential elements of significant change are in place:
resources for informal as well as formal communication around complex issues, a community power base, leaders who can put aside short-range self-interests to identify mutual interests, public awareness of a clear, important social problem. Ironically one of the best ways for communities to address their long range needs for human resources is to develop the human resources required to attend to the problem. This means recognizing the need for someone regularly to concentrate some part of his or her attention on the process of collaboration,

to devote time and energy toward participation in a network of others who share that responsibility, and to consciously address development of calloborative leadership.

This report itself offers evidence to support a fundamental recommendation -- that leaders engaged in collaboration take steps to document the process, assigning someone who is close to the action and has access to key actors. Ideally the person documenting the process should have opportunities to exchange ideas and reflect with people in similar situations.

There are four future steps for MetroLink. The first is to maintain linkages among existing sites of collaborative activities. The second is to identify other interested sites and enlist their key representatives in a growing network. The third is to enlarge the network by sharing its resources widely with related networks concerned with the same or related issues. The fourth step is to maintain structures for broad-based communication among all of these participants to understand and improve the process of collaboration itself.

CROSS-SECTOR COLLABORATION IN EIGHT METROPOLITAN AREAS: ATLANTA, BOSTON HARTFORD, INDIANAPOLIS, LOUISVILLE, MINNEAPOLIS, PORTLAND, SAINT LOUIS.

Atlanta, Georgia

Atlanta has a reputation for cooperation even in the worst of times. In the sixties, when the civil rights movement reached its peak in confrontations across the South, a group of white civic leaders in Atlanta began a campaign of accomodation. They called Atlanta "the city too busy to hate" and joined local black leaders like Reverend Martin Luther King, Senior, to remove legal segregation without disruption. Their slogan captured a spirit that still prevails in Atlanta, that strife is bad for business. Today the city of 427,000 -- two thirds black -- is a financial and commercial boom town, and cooperative efforts have extended into the seven-county metropolitan area, whose population has grown rapidly over the past two decades to more than two million people. Many middle class blacks as well as whites have left for the suburbs, and 28 percent of the city now lives below the poverty line. Large numbers of unemployed lower-class blacks can show few economic benefits stemming from the political gains of the civil rights movement. They can sit down to eat at the Peachtree Plaza Hotel, but they can't pay the bill. Finally, as in most urban areas, a large percentage of the poorest people are children.

The city's schools, which were 35 percent white in 1970, have lost more white students than most other major school systems. There are about 12,000 white students in local private schools; 7,000 white students comprise only 6 percent of the public school enrollment. In recent years the challenge facing Atlanta's metropolitan leaders has been to assure that Atlanta can guarantee all of its children a decent public school education.

Since its founding in January of 1981, the Atlanta Partnership of Business & Education, Inc., has drawn national attention as a model for success in enlisting community support of public schools. The Partnership is actually the second attempt at a "metropolitan cooperative" program. The first, a program sponsored by Georgia State University and the Atlanta Public Schools, provided a summer program for gifted youngsters under a grant obtained by the MetroLink coordinator and Superintendent Crim. Within two years that program had attracted students throughout the metropolitan area. The MetroLink coordinator subsequently joined in expanded more formalized cooperative associations -- Dr. Crim's "Superintendent/Dean's Breakfast Club" (regular meetings with representatives of higher education) as well as the Partnership -- developed to encourage "informed sharing of mutual interests."

The Partnership consists of a formal "network" that includes the business community, higher education, the public school system and individual citizens -- "a community of believers." This community also includes many civic, educational, parent, religious and political groups. The Schools/Neighborhood Religious Coalition, initially focused on improved communication with the school system and increased child advocacy efforts, has expanded activities to include shelter for latchkey children, food and clothing banks and tutoring. Student tutorial services are promoted within the churches, and coordinated with the Partnership.

The central goal of the Partnership is "to improve the quality of life for the people of our area by improving their educational attainment level." The major strategy to reach this goal is through collaborative efforts of private businesses, public schools and higher education (primarily Georgia State University). More specifically, the Partnership has sought to raise average standardized test scores of students in basic literacy skills at or above the national norm. The philosophic rationale for the Partnership is that in order for all of the children in Atlanta to be given the opportunity to have quality education, people whom students perceive as influential must participate actively in encouraging educational achievement. Students must understand that those whom they respect and admire value learning, and that school pays off in the "real world" of jobs and social mobility.

The goals of the Partnership were highly compatible with the purposes of the MetroLink project. The goals of the Partnership, defined in three Atlanta publications, are educational and economic: to raise mean standardized test scores to the national norm, to enhance the economic development potential of Atlanta, and to improve the Atlanta standard of living through economic and educational development. The interests, goals and objectives of the different parties are therefore both consistent and mutual, and participants were generally committed to achieving five objectives of collaboration. These goals included: (1) "Adoption" of all public schools by companies; (2) Development of affirmative action/job placement programs for 1000 students in the bottom quartile of the junior and senior classes; (3) Assembling of an ongoing group representing agencies and organizations to build school-business networks around the use of technology in education, including magnet schools; (4) Expansion of student tutorial/parent-teacher associations; and (5) Establishment of the Metro-Atlanta Principals' Institute, including an assessment component based upon the National Association of Secondary School Principals model for assessment.

Adopt-A-School currently includes nearly all schools and more than 150 organizations. The Partnership matches identified school needs with business resources. Activities must be student-centered. Dr. Boyd Odom, the Executive Director of the Partnership, says, "We must get out of our thoughts the idea that business is helping schools or that schools are helping business. Our approach is, 'There are things we would like to see happen. If we work together we can make them happen.'"

The affirmative action/job placement program has expanded to include all 20 Atlanta city high schools. The Principals' Institute has been created for assessment and training of school principals and the Partnership concepts have begun to expand into the metropolitan region. The Partnership moved its office to Georgia State University to signify its independence of major corporate sponsors and of the school system. In addition, the Partnership coordinates several other programs, such as Distinguished Scholars, Work-Study, and a Speaker's Bureau.

The most visible leader in establishing the Partnership has been Superintendent of Schools Alonzo Crim, who has the trust and confidence of Atlanta business and community leaders. The relationships undergirding the Partnership seem to reflect Dr. Crim's open style of leadership. The partnerships that have developed during his tenure have been based on mutual trust. In particular, Dr. Crim's strategy of exposing both the strengths and the weaknesses of the school system to public scrutiny has succeeded in capturing broad support among the leaders of Atlanta's business community.

Collaboration in the metropolitan area includes business chief executive officers, university administrators and faculty, members of metropolitan area boards of education and superintendents of schools, religious and community leaders. Linkages among these groups have strengthened during the past five years, with community leaders from all sectors participating actively on the Partnership board of directors, its board of officers, steering committees, and the activities themselves.

There are 125 senior level public sector individuals and 40 Chief Executive Officers involved in the Partnership itself, and almost all private sector participants are "for profit." They include large (60%), medium (25%), and small (15%) companies. All told, more than 185 organizations and over 90 religious groups are involved.

Dr. Odom maintains and develops new contacts with the various leaders throughout the Atlanta community. He works with a Planning Group which includes the MetroLink site coordinator, who is based at the School of Education at Georgia State University. The coordinator, during the MetroLink project period, together with two University colleagues in research, has focused upon expanding communication with metropolitan school leaders and upon developing formal working agreements to plan and implement such projects as the Metro-Atlanta Principals' Institute.

The stability and future growth of the Atlanta Partnership may depend upon how well the various leaders come to rely upon this structure as a trustworthy forum for addressing complex educational and social issues. Ongoing uncertainties include grassroots involvement, and public relations with the low-income black community. The MetroLink coordinator and his colleagues are helping the various individuals and organizations in the Partnership to identify and focus -- formally and informally -- on how the Partnership can become such a forum.

Dr. Odom is optimistic about the future of collaboration in the Atlanta area and elsewhere:

> *In five to ten years the exception will be sites where collaboration is not taking place. We are experiencing an exponential growth in knowledge...I am encouraged by what I see happening over the country. It used to be hard to find a model, even a bad one. Now that there are partnerships, collaborative efforts, in many places, especially since the President picked up on the idea...*
>
> *Collaboration needs to be understood by leaders and reinforced in public schools. Businesses are now having to train employees in things that educators (schools) should be doing. To develop more community leaders, I favor the seminar approach. We need to bring in people who are not in partnership with those who are and have the group share concepts.*

The aims and objectives of the Partnership are conceived to reflect the combined resources and talents of Atlanta's "believers" -- a community that has demonstrated commitment to sharing expertise and offering other forms of in-kind contributions. The major task of the Partnership is now to assure that the venture would not collapse if leadership or priorities of existing groups change.

Dr. Crim is convinced that the school system has improved its capacity to deliver instruction because of increasing collaboration over the past five years. "I anticipate continued growth," he says. "This is not a one-shot effort." He thinks that a focus for future collaboration must be to develop leadership:

> *Leaders of the future have to be taught. Leadership is communication and collaboration. To borrow from Eisenhower, you can't push a string, you have to pull it. We have to teach how to gain consensus and cooperation. Internship is also necessary. Present leaders have to take on the responsibility of training other leaders.*
>
> *It has been said that great people are just ordinary people who pursued great ideas...There are two deliberate approaches to training new leaders. One is through Leadership Atlanta in identifying persons from business and government and make them cognizant of the needs of the community and the community purpose. We have to aid them to give of themselves. Secondly, each institution must take on the notion that leadership is the most important commodity and must come about through deliberate design.*

Boston, Massachusetts

It is a fact that Massachusetts generated more new jobs in the past year than the Great State of Texas did. Boston itself is undergoing an economic boom that is providing unprecedented opportunities for every segment of the labor force.

As women enter the workforce in increasing numbers in the Boston metropolitan community, it seems clear that business and industry, education and training institutions, and policymakers must collaborate in order to avoid traditional workplace stereotypes, particularly in the growth industries of the eighties and nineties. The Boston area MetroLink project, located in the Office of the Massachusetts Secretary of Economic Affairs (OEA), aimed at addressing issues of policy and practice for reducing and preventing sexual segregation in emerging and growing high-technology occupations, particularly in the metropolitan area surrounding Boston.

The coordinator noted that in creating the Boston Compact, the Boston community had already established a national reputation for cross-sector collaboration and partnership strategies to address issues of public concern. The Compact, a bargain between the school system and the business community, demonstrated that business and educational leaders could reach consensus around objectives, policies and desired programmatic changes. The Compact "could serve as a valuable analogue" for an effort to address occupational segregation in expanding technological industries.

During the earliest stages of the project the coordinator (a former educator who was then a legal intern within the Office of the Secretary), identified specific areas where data-gathering and analysis -- essential tools for policy formation and program planning -- have been practically non-existent in this rapidly growing field.

The coordinator sought to develop a cross-sector policy development effort focusing upon some aspect of occupational segregation; improvement in women's employment is an area of special interest to the Secretary. On the strength of the Secretary's endorsement, the coordinator approached staff of the Executive Office of Economic Affairs (EOEA), individually and in groups, to create a planning group. She maintained close touch with staff who would crucially influence such matters as staff time, availability of interns to do research, etc. -- especially important because the project had been added to an already heavy workload.

Political considerations were important in the earliest stages of this project. Potential direct practical benefits to projects funded under the federal Job Training and Partnership Act (JTPA) and Bay State Skills programs would avoid the "Golden Fleece" image of impractical research. In seeking a place to locate the project, the coordinator also tried to preserve an image of neutrality.

Plans for specific applications of new information for policy development were approved, and staff clarified project goals and definitions of occupational segregation. Decisions on where to locate the project depended on three criteria:

1. Ability to address the possibility that research reviews of occupational segregation within JTPA would produce limited data and possible resistance from colleagues who might feel that the coordinator was monitoring them.

2. The project had to be narrowed to a problem which could be addressed by cross-sector collaboration that would also be visible and innovative.

3. An emerging industry had to be selected -- something which has developed beyond the research and development stage, where workforce trends can be identified and examined.

Two simultaneous events helped planning staff focus on microelectronics. First, the fiscal manager and the senior staff manager for policy and research agreed on the priority of this project. This fiscal manager agreed to assign and direct research by a junior staffer. Second, the press highlighted analysis of the impact of high-tech upon employment in Massachusetts, and the Secretary led public controversy about interpretation of statistics. A formal response stated that high technology employment is for more significant in Massachusetts than in most other states, and that there is a much higher concentration of professional and technical workers in Massachusetts than the U.S. data indicate. Furthermore, the Undersecretary stated that the MetroLink project could create a good image helping to stimulate cross-sector collaboration between industry and government to improve women's employment.

The main long-range strategy was to promote further understanding of strategies used by firms successful in retaining women in non-traditional occupations currently dominated by men, and to explore possibilities for integration where traditional jobs are strongly male or female. A new "high-tech" industry was defined as one involved in research and development of new knowledge-based technologies where jobs are still being defined and career patterns are still flexible and undeveloped. The research was designed to generate policy data for two purposes: first, to encourage industry to identify jobs that will be generated and to develop sex-integrated career ladders and sex-neutral hiring and promotion practices; and second, to design and develop education, employment and training programs reflecting industrial projections of jobs so that women might take advantage of emerging work opportunities.

The project was designed around two phases: first, research and analysis; second, planning seminars that would involve meetings with key policymakers in the targeted industry, education, government, employment and training. EOA sought to focus on an industry in which affirmative intervention and influence on the development of a stable, integrated workforce would be feasible. The most reasonable type of industry would be one in the development stage, where an occupational spectrum or hierarchy could be clearly discerned. The potential impact of research and development applications on projected employment was seen as an especially rich area to explore. An unknown: how receptive would industrial policymakers be to collaboration, negotiation and policy development to increase women's entry into and retention in the full spectrum of industrial job classifications? Indeed, how willing would they be to share potentially controversial data?

A questionnaire for a sample of area microelectronics firms was created for distribution and analysis in spring of 1985. A workplan prepared in February focused on the strategy for completing the research phase. A staff intern was assigned to the coordinator one day per week to develop a mailing list of microelectronics firms and to prepare a final draft of the survey instrument. The instrument was prepared in close consultation with the agency's research staff and the Secretary, and mailing materials were reviewed thoroughly in order to assure a clean, manageable set of materials capable of eliciting responses from industry.

The mailing was sent on March 1, 1985 to 75 Greater Boston microelectronics firms -- practically every firm in the area. The mailing included a cover letter from the Secretary, the survey instrument, a statement of purpose of the survey, and a brief description of the project. Confidentiality for responses was strongly emphasized.

At the same time, the Boston press carried a series of articles about gender segregation, particularly the bottleneck for women in high tech jobs. The Boston Globe data presented a disturbing profile and stated that men's salaries rise over the years of employment, while women's salaries "remain flat and go down." Furthermore, "Women in high technology do poorly in promotions."

There were only two completed responses returned by the response date. Phone calls to the firms requesting that the survey be completed resulted in about 20 direct refusals to participate in any surveys. Fourteen firms that said they did not recall the materials were sent a second set. In the end, of the seven surveys that were completed, only two were sufficiently complete to yield helpful data.

Several firms stated that they thought OEA was doing an affirmative action follow-up. The coordinator speculated that perhaps the study would have been perceived more neutrally if there had been a private sector base. The microelectronics industry is in great flux, hungry for ideas and talent. Many firms are small and new. High turnover of the workforce may be a normal response to market pressures for innovation and new products. The high turnover of women may reflect the numerous options available to them. Mobility may benefit women's progression in careers and companies themselves, especially when international markets force rapid fluctuation. If this is true, then inquiries about rates of retention in the workforce would have low priority.

Limited as the responses were, they were informative. For example:

- The length of employment for men and women was relatively short (two to three and a half years) and was comparable.
- Percentages confirmed the small number of women in higher workforce echelons.
- Programs and policies did not target women; companies stressed overall retention of all employees through training, monitoring programs, benefits, opportunities for advancement, excellent working conditions.
- One major firm reported effective use of women's networks in hiring; 77% of referrals were for engineers and other technical professions.
- Programs to accomodate special needs of women included a corporate child care center nearby; personnel policies that included gender-neutral policies; an open-door policy to ensure communication between supervisors and employees, and a work environment free from sexual harassment.

Hartford, Connecticut

Despite its prosperous appearance and its reputation as the insurance capitol of the nation, Hartford, Connecticut is the fourth poorest city (per capita) in the United States, according to the U.S. Census Bureau. The contrast between the image of Hartford and its neighborhood communities is especially startling because Hartford is booming economically. Office development has added nearly three million square feel of office space in the last two years. The area is expected to generate over 70,000 jobs in the next few years. By 1990, openings within a total employment of 491,000 will be 127,000. In the past four years, there has been an increase of 10,000 people employed in the financial, insurance and real estate industries -- currently about 70,000.

Hartford, in essence, is a tale of two cities: a daytime city of economic boom and a nighttime city of poverty, unemployment and underemployment. Despite predictions of shortages of both entry-level and skilled workers in the region for the next 20 years, large numbers of city residents -- particularly the black and Hispanic residents which respectively comprise 40 percent and 25 percent of Hartford's population -- too frequently find themselves unable to participate in the labor market expansion created by the region's economic growth. A recent study of the structural unemployment in the Hartford Labor Market Area (HLMA) conducted by the Community Council of the Capitol Region estimated that there are 35,000 unemployed or underemployed individuals in the region who could benefit from employment and related services.

Demographic data about Hartford's poor and unemployed generated during the course of the MetroLink project illustrate this city of contrasts:

- Approximately 55 percent of the unemployed in the HLMA -- almost 20,000 people, and more than 62 percent of Hartford's General Assistance recipients and 70 percent of AFDC recipients participating in the Work Incentive Program (WIN) -- lack a high school diploma.

- More than half of the Hartford area unemployed who seek to enroll in skills training programs funded by the Jobs Training Partnership Act (JTPA) must be turned away because they cannot read, write or compute well enough to enter training.

- Almost 46 percent of the 16-19 year-olds in Hartford who are no longer in school left school prior to graduation and are now unemployed.

- More than 95 percent of the students enrolled in the city's three public high schools are minorities.

- 58 percent of Hartford public school students are from households receiving welfare benefits.

- More than 20 percent of Hartford public school students are enrolled in bilingual classes, 10 percent in special education programs, and 33 percent in compensatory or remedial instruction.

One key public policy question in Hartford is who will benefit from the region's economic vitality. How will current city residents become better educated and trained for this emerging prosperity? And how will the public school system prepare its graduates for the increasingly sophisticated needs of Hartford's financial institutions?

There are three groups addressing Hartford's efforts to deal with human resource development and the spectrum of education, training and employment: the Greater Hartford Chamber of Commerce, the Private Industry Council (PIC), and the City of Hartford's Employment Development Agency.

The MetroLink coordinator, the Vice President for Human Resource Development for the Chamber, has been instrumental in helping the business community and the public schools to reconstitute collaborative activities that had begun over a decade ago. The Hartford School-Business Collaborative (SBC), in particular, has offered a potentially effective means of planning and carrying out long-range efforts involving several groups. The SBC, which began in 1982, was originally intended to develop strategies to reduce dropout rates and improve students' scores on standardized tests. As most observers would agree, the original SBC set important goals, but organizing to achieve those goals proved difficult and the business community's attention ebbed over time.

An evaluation of SBC activities was conducted between December, 1983 and March, 1984 by an independent organization. Leadership Greater Hartford. The collaborative process used to strengthen the SBC exemplified how evaluation data can be used to shape policies and programs.

The original goals of SBC offer a useful reference point in assessing the extent to which interests, goals, and objectives of different participating parties are consistent and mutual. The evaluation identified six functional areas that deserve attention:

(1) stimulation of new programs,
(2) evaluating and documenting results (the weakest area),
(3) acting as resource-facilitator/broker,
(4) coordination of collaboration (no real role existed),
(5) improving communication (wide agreement was evident), and
(6) providing access to resources outside Hartford.

There was consensus that "there is a deep and genuine interest in working toward shared goals;" equally important, "people are just no longer willing to give serious attention to the [non-substantive] work plan outlined two years ago." (The Mission Statement of 1982 was "to support and optimize basic education in Hartford Public Schools, K-12, with specific emphasis on increasing youth employability." Typical specific objectives: (a) to increase the number of businesses in teacher partnership programs from 0 to 2; (b) to add one school to the one school engaged in computer assisted instruction.)

The latest phase of the School Business Collaborative -- sometimes called SBC II -- is co-chaired by the Superintendent of the Hartford Public Schools and a prominent Hartford corporate executive who had also been a school board president in a neighboring Connecticut town. The President of the Greater Hartford

Chamber of Commerce, together with the co-chair of the SBC, and the Vice Chair of the Human Resource Development Department, serve as links to the Chamber's Board of Directors, and, hence, the business community. The MetroLink coordinator placed top priority on the linkage because all major stakeholders who were missing from the original group (SBC I) -- even representatives from the Governor's Office and the State Department of Education -- were included. In addition to Chamber members (primarily decisionmakers in the human resource development area), the SBC includes school system administrators, city and state officials, and representatives of parents' organizations, labor unions and foundations.

Major strengths established at the outset of the effort included decisions that there would be no representation by substitutes at meetings, there would be a formal membership selection process, and that standards for attendance at SBC meetings would be strictly enforced.

Eager to avoid spreading its resources too thinly, the group settled on the issue of youth employment as a focus for reorganization. Through the use of a professional third-party group facilitation form -- which used a collaborative problem solving method (reaching "consensus" posed the first obstacle for the newly-constituted group to overcome) -- SBC II launched its latest evolution in January, 1985.

The mission statement of the SBC defines its primary purpose as ensuring that entry-level employment opportunities are available to all graduates of the Hartford Public Schools (HPS) who have met or surpassed competency standards for "work-readiness." Toward that end, the SBC has worked with the Hartford Public Schools (HPS) to implement programs designed to help Hartford youth attain these competency standards.

The outstanding visible result of this new brand of collaboration has been the School-to-Work Transition Project, an innovative joint effort launched in March, 1985 to assist job seeking members of the HPS class of 1985. With a $60,000 start-up grant from the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving, two employment specialists (hired as Chamber staff) were placed in each of the city's three public high schools to provide career assessment, testing, referral and placement services to the job-seeking seniors considered to be "at risk" of long-term unemployment. The School-to-Work project linked the results of prior youth conferences, sponsored by the PIC, and other initiatives in an intensive effort to address a clear need demonstrated by the in-depth graduate follow-up study of the HPS Class of 1984. This study found that 20 percent of the Class of '84 was unemployed or underemployed.

The pilot phase of the School-to-Work project lasted from March to June, 1985. By November, 1985, the School-to-Work staff succeeded in placing more than 60 percent of the program participants in full-time employment and achieved an overall positive termination rate of almost 80 percent. Over 40 firms in the Hartford area hired the School-to-Work graduates.

From the perspective of the MetroLink coordinator, the School-to-Work pilot is seen as an overwhelming success achieved in a brief period of time. The reasons for this success are numerous:

- The excellent working relationship between SBC staff and the HPS; despite many problems, these various personnel weathered many storms together;
- The high degree of cooperation between the program's employment specialists and each high school's guidance and youth employment staff;
- The support and technical assistance from the youth employment division of the school system;
- The ready availability of funds needed to implement the pilot phase of the program;
- The caliber of employment specialists;
- The direct involvement and commitment of local employers; finally, and perhaps most importantly,
- The School-to-Work program filled an obvious gap in the services available to job-seeking seniors.

The MetroLink coordinator also stressed that the pragmatic leadership of the SBC co-chairmen and their sound working relationship aided the project' success. The School-to-Work project was also adopted as a Community Action Project by participants in the American Leadership Forum, a group of top executives in Hartford who provided a wide array of support services, as well as numerous jobs, for School-to-Work participants.

The first full-year cycle of the School-to-Work program began in September, 1985, with over 300 job-seeking seniors in the Class of '86 participating. The 1985-86 program specifically recruited those students in the lowest quartile of their class who have not been receiving services from other employment-related programs.

In February, 1986, a new dimension was added to the School-to-Work program. With a second grant from the Hartford Foundation for Public Giving, stipends will be available for after-school jobs in the public and non-profit sectors. Placement of about 75 of the nearly 300 participating students in after-school jobs is an important component, for it reflects research showing that the best predictor of a young person's ability to find, secure and keep a job is prior work experience.

In 1986, the SBC staff is working with staff at one of the city's middle schools to implement Project SAVE, an employment-oriented program for eighth graders who are deemed most likely to drop out of school.

The outcome of all these coordinated efforts is to build on the focused success of "SBC II" and create a sturdy bridge for high risk students making the transition from school to work.

Indianapolis, Indiana

Indianapolis is a city whose quiet but steady growth has not until recently included large scale youth employment programs. The initiative called Partners 2000 was the first major collaborative effort in the Indianapolis-Marion County area that attempted to deal with long-range problems affecting at-risk youth. While its fundamental goal was to place disadvantaged Marion County youth in summer job experiences, another purpose was to explore the nature of cross-sector collaboration in the Indianapolis area. A great deal of effort and attention was therefore devoted to evaluation of the process as well as the results over a two-year period.

The MetroLink coordinator is the Executive Director of the Greater Indianapolis Progress Committee (GIPC) -- a non-profit, bipartisan advisory group to the mayor's office and sponsored by the business community. When GIPC created its Subcommittee for the Employment Opportunities Task Force, its main purpose was twofold: first, to provide summer jobs, and second to involve business people in addressing a long-range issue, unemployment among disadvantaged youth, many of whom are minorities. The broader mission to "develop an apparatus that will maximize employment opportunities" for youth long-term was endorsed by representatives from the Private Industry Council, the school system, the City of Indianapolis and the Chamber of Commerce.

For the past two years Partners 2000 has joined leaders from business, the school system and the larger community to address the problem of high unemployment among disadvantaged youth throughout the Indianapolis-Marion County area. The rationale for this effort was that early exposure to the world of work is important in forming youths' realistic expectations of the labor market and their personal responsibilities in employer-employee relationships. The project also stressed that successful transition between school and work depended greatly upon prior work experience. The premise of the program design was that summer employment cannot be merely a temporary job; it must augment a youth's formal educational experiences with an experiential learning environment.

Therefore the program objectives included much more than placement of disadvantaged youth. Additional objectives were, for example:

- To reward youth for remaining in school;
- To expose participants to needed information for making informed and deliberate choices about immediate and future employment and education;
- To use existing community expertise in developing a well-organized program design by involving major organizations and institutions representing several sectors;
- To establish a sound program approach which will result in successful community linkages, administrative systems and program procedures which will serve as the basis for future summer and year-round youth program operations.

In other words, the process goals of Partners 2000 had high priority from the outset of the effort. The structure for collaboration was largely informal, for the coalition was never operated by one organization or identified with one group. GIPC served as an intermediary and was able to maintain a relatively neutral posture because of its 20-year operating history, nonprofit status and advisory role.

While all accepted the initial concept of specific roles for each organization, a number of issues persisted. For example, participants had to work out whether the roles GIPC described in the concept paper were acceptable to each organization in actual practice. For example, should the roles of GIPC and the Chamber be confined to endorsement and giving advice, or should they include operation as well?

Certain issues persisted. The most apparent was who would pay for the program. This issue, though, reflected a larger problem in reaching common definitions of the roles and responsibilities among participants. Among the troublesome areas of planning were problematic staff relationships, a lack of group definition of success, lack of consensus building, and a lack of flexibility in exploring possibilities.

Many of these problems were resolved in the period following the 1984 summer program but were seen as symptomatic of an underlying issue: "Is one organization ultimately responsible for the actions of all others and the success of the program?"

Disagreement about the definition of success, for example, could be traced to contrasting views of the extent of community involvement versus qualified data: numbers of businesses and students participating, number of youth hired. Tensions around the issue of "success" hindered consensus building. Related issues concerned timely communication of information, the goal of the private sector, and the relationship of the Indianapolis Public Schools to the other systems within Marion County.

The performance of the partnership in placing over 3,000 disadvantaged young people in summer job experiences (1,000 more than the original goal) testifies to the growing strength of the private sector involvement in enabling the partnership to succeed. Particularly noteworthy is the system called JobNet, designed for soliciting employers to participate in Partners 2000. Based on analysis of the results in solicitation of employers of all sizes and types in the first year, the project refined its system into a proposal to institutionalize the procedures. The result was a permanent data base of Indianapolis area employers and their history of participation in Partners 2000. A related objective was to build JobNet's volunteer support functions within existing staff of the Indianapolis Alliance for Jobs, GIPC, and the Chamber of Commerce.

In the second year, JobNet was integrated into the Chamber and was expanded in order to coordinate all solicitation, eliminating duplicate contacts of employers, allowing for common use of sales material and combining mechanisms to track job pledges. Consultants coordinated the volunteers in a "three-tier" structure. The three "tiers" were: (1) Renewal of 1984 employers, (2) Creation of a volunteer solicitation network, and (3) Partners 2000 staff phone solicitation. Each tier was composed of specific tasks and responsibilities, including time-lines.

Student recruitment and intake, job matching and placement, marketing and public relations were assessed through an evaluation process that included incorporation of evaluation strategies in the program design, inclusion of an independent evaluator in all relevant planning stages and exposure of the evaluator to the participants and employers to gain understanding of their experiences. In depth case studies of selected participants were also conducted.

The final evaluation of Partners 2000 1985 expands upon the 1984 judgement that the program was highly effective:

> *It is likely that the summer of 1984 will be remembered as the time when Indianapolis youth employment turned the corner on programmatic effectiveness...What was accomplished...serves as a prototype not only for how the potential of youth employment can be developed in this city, but as a dramatic example nation-wide for the potential of the Job Training Partnership Act in facilitating youth development...*

The theme of the 1985 evaluation is consistent:

> *It is astonishing, indeed, that 3,040 students had meaningful work experience. Even more astonishing was the fact that every eligible student under the JTPA guidelines could have had a job if they wanted it.*

The main reason for the program's success, confirmed repeatedly in comments from students and employers, was the "diligence of the Partners 2000 staff" combined with that of the general support of the Alliance for Jobs and the PIC. The experience of the MetroLink coordinator over two years, however, reveals that a major task was to bring harmony between the PIC and the public school system. The underlying conflict involved how to identify eligible students. The PIC took the major initiative by selling the program widely under its own banner and resisted having the schools heavily involved in the partnership. The relationship improved when school officials permitted greater access to students by outside agencies under the auspices of a neutral party.

The school system in the second year agreed to be the liaison to the county school systems in order to reach youth outside the city limits.

Planning for the 1986 program will be conducted by the Alliance for Jobs. The consultants for the program are packaging the program in the form of "JobNet U.S.A," a for-profit venture to market the successes in other cities.

Louisville, Kentucky

Jefferson County, Kentucky, which includes Louisville, is a metropolitan area which has only just begun to develop its potential resources for cross-sector collaboration. The recent developments must be viewed in light of the events since 1974, when the Louisville City School System and the Jefferson County Schools were ordered to desegregate. In 1975, a merger between the two school districts divided the community.

The merged board was also split, staff morale and the performance of the schools were extremely low for several years under successive former superintendents. The current superintendent, Dr. Ingwerson, was hired in 1981.

Although a tax increase for schools failed at the polls, confidence in the superintendent increased with the visibility of his activities to inform and involve the community with the schools. For example, the superintendent organized a day-long seminar, beginning with breakfast and including visits to specific schools and ending with a social hour for discussion of school needs. The seminar included business leaders, the Jefferson County Teachers Association, university officials, local and state officials, and media. The attitude of major community leaders toward the school system improved from that date onward.

The superintendent and staff met regularly with groups that had expressed concern and support. The Junior League, for instance, offered financial and volunteer support of individual schools, conducted a survey of 50 chief executive officers, and publicized exemplary school projects. This project identified leaders willing to devote time and energy to school improvement. The goal was to recruit assistance in the form of expertise, funds and other material resources, management, and training on behalf of school improvement, and to foster ongoing dialogue between the schools and private sector groups.

Project momentum slowed during the spring of 1985 because of system-wide difficulties involving court-mandated pupil re-assignments. However, the policies and basic themes of collaboration were unaffected.

The superintendent and school board established the goals for addressing issues and formed a planning committee. They hired a consultant and developed a plan for projects ranging from work-study to computer-assisted instruction. They also decided to match one or more businesses with each elementary, middle and high school (a total of 153) in partnerships. A booklet of guidelines was sent to each principal.

Superintendent Ingwerson brought into his administration as a special assistant in charge of school/business partnership activities a person who had been on leave from the Jefferson County Public Schools to work with the Kentucky State Department of Education. This person became the MetroLink coordinator for the Louisville area. He met with the elementary school principals as a group and individually to discuss the School/Business Partnership effort.

The coordinator discovered that there were many more activities connecting school with community resources than anyone realized. He found that until someone took the responsibility (in this case to document activities for MetroLink) to assess the development of cooperative activities in the schools, much of the information about partnerships and other forms of assistance to the schools remained impressionistic with little solid common information.

The responses of the business community and civic organizations have reflected goals established by the Board of Education. In 1982, the Jefferson County Board of Education committed the school district to helping each student become "computer-literate." This commitment required that computer laboratories be established in every school. Humana, Inc., took the lead among local private sector firms to pilot a computer program designed to enhance elementary classroom instruction.

David A. Jones, Humana's Chairman and CEO, explained the dual purposes of the company's donation of $150,000 to equip the Roosevelt-Parry Elementary School with 75 computers. He stressed that in addition to promoting computer literacy, the contribution was intended to encourage widespread community action to help the schools improve:

> *This isn't merely a contribution -- it's an investment in the future of our city. We believe that...efficient use of computers now have the potential to provide high quality education in our schools...We hope that our support in this important project will create a success story that will encourage the entire community to get involved in improving the quality of education.*

The Gheens Foundation provided $680,000 for retraining teachers and school administrators. The school board, encouraged by the program, approved a plan to raise between $4-$5 million to equip all public schools with computers.

The business community would not be willing to provide significant material support for the school system if it did not have confidence in the superintendent. Once the superintendent became accepted among top leaders in Louisville, it was possible to justify extraordinary support. Various businesses and organizations made substantial grants -- several in the $50,000 to $75,000 range -- to support various experiments to improve academic performance.

The preliminary findings of the Roosevelt-Parry pilot program exceeded projections. The Ad II Committee proposed The New Kid in School, a summer publicity campaign that included radio and television public service announcements, billboard displays throughout the city and press releases. The Jefferson County Public Education Foundation agreed to receive corporate and individual donations, to monitor expenditures and to assist fund raising.

Enthusiasm for The New Kid in School grew through the winter of 1984-85. The Board of Education approved the 60-20-20 partnership proposal for computer education in the district's elementary schools. Sixty percent of the computer funding would be sought from corporations. The elementary schools, through the local support of PTAs and community groups, would contribute 20 percent of the total cost. The school district would supply the remaining 20 percent from its general fund.

Seven months later, $1,435,909 had been committed to The New Kid in School program. The goal was to reach 4.4 million by 1987-1988. Eighty elementary schools had submitted letters indicating that they had raised or would soon raise their share of the cost of eight, sixteen, or thirty-two unit computer labs.

This project was one of several examples of increased public-private sector activities. A school-to-individual business model initiated by Louisville's Junior League was replicated in more than thirty schools. It was sponsored by New Foundations in Education, an arm of the Jefferson County Public Education Foundation. That one-year project has been incorporated under a partnership umbrella provided by the Foundation and the Louisville Chamber of Commerce.

Louisville has also helped stimulate the state legislative initiative to foster partnership agreements across the state. These partnerships enlist small and medium-sized businesses, community groups, religious organizations and institutions, and governmental and social service agencies in helping local public schools. Statewide, the Jefferson County Public Schools and the Jefferson County Public Education Foundation have also influenced partnership development.

In 1984, the Foundation contracted with the Education Cabinet of Governor Martha Layne Collins to coordinate Strengthening Partnerships Between School and Community. In December, 1984, this project drew 600 people from 120 school districts to the first Governor's Partnership Conference and resulted in dozens of active partnerships across the state. The Jefferson County Public Schools secured a contract to follow up the conference.

As the school system recovers from the effects of a difficult and prolonged period of turmoil and absence from leadership, there has been increased positive focus on the schools and a more systemic involvement of the business community in supporting public education. Elements of cross-sector collaboration are definitely present.

Minneapolis, Minnesota

This MetroLink site, whose coordinator is located in the Minneapolis Mayor's Office, originally included both Minneapolis and Saint Paul, "twin cities" that constitute the core of a seven-county metropolitan area with a population of over two million.

Minneapolis, which has a population of 370,000, is the younger and larger of the two, having grown around an industrial base of food products (General Mills, International Multifoods, Cargill, and the Pillsbury and Peavey companies), technology (Honeywell and Control Data), retail (Dayton Hudson), and insurance (Lutheran Brotherhood, Northwestern National Life and American Hardware Mutual).

Throughout the city's history, these and other home-based companies have attracted attention for their enlightened community interest. William Ouchi, in his book The M-Form Society, which compares Minneapolis' cooperative style with that of Japanese corporate management, praises the city for its "social memory:" corporate good deeds are highly appreciated here, he points out, and corporate good citizenship is long remembered.

Whether this indicates a future of cooperative effort, however, has been brought into question because of business consolidations and the arrival of new CEO's from "outside." A recent study by the Minnesota Project on Corporate Responsibility -- a business-financed endeavour -- notes that new leadership so far appears to endorse the strong tradition of community consciousness.

Saint Paul, on the other hand, has different ethnic and religious origins and a government different in both style and form from that of Minneapolis. With a population of 267,000, its government, school system, newspapers, and even telephone book are separate from those of Minneapolis. There is little communication between the cities' offices. Saint Paul has a "strong mayor" form of government, while the Minneapolis Mayor and City Council Members attempt to work together as equal partners in a structure that some describe as a "weak-mayor/ weak-council," with no concentration of formal power.

The two cities also sit amid 139 city and 50 suburban township governments, many of which have their own school systems and corporate centers.

With these differences and a longstanding absence of close working relationships, making and keeping good contact for the MetroLink project proved difficult. On two different occasions, staff changes in the Saint Paul Mayor's Office eliminated the contact person, removing easy access to that office. In addition, just as MetroLink began to take shape, the long-time Saint Paul Superintendent resigned, signaling a major preoccupation within that school system as it searched for and started adjusting to new leadership. Therefore, while the Saint Paul business people, educators and two different Mayor's aides participated in planning the initial project concept -- a conference intended to have follow-up activities -- Saint Paul's participation in this project was marginal.

The MetroLink coordinator expedited extensive planning efforts for collaboration intended to address the employability of at-risk youth and the area's labor needs. There were several false starts.

The idea of a seminar series based on the model of IEL's State Education Policy Seminars program was attractive, and over a period of weeks it took the form of planning a conference involving representatives from several sectors and focusing upon the hard-to-employ. A central concern was the quality of preparation for entry into the Minneapolis metropolitan labor force.

The initial plan was to convene a group of policy makers for a seminar designed to improve communication and develop planning strategies in Twin Cities education/employment partnerships. These would include a variety of people "with the power and desire to make things happen" -- representatives of business, schools, foundations, Chambers of Commerce, mayors' offices, Twin City councils, State Department of Education, legislators, and organized labor.

Planning topics revolved around unemployed youth or secondary school youth "at risk of not having sufficient job-preparation and job-holding skills to succeed in the world of work." Planners considered broadening the focus to include job retraining for adults, preparing qualified employees for jobs in high-tech industries, and merging planning operations with the University of Minnesota, which was scheduling a fall conference on basic skills and the workforce, an opportunity which would bring in additional resources from both legislative and administrative branches of state government, and the academic community.

A seminar approach was expected to help join varied sectors together with city government people, a need especially evident in Saint Paul. Meanwhile, the MetroLink coordinator worked with University of Minnesota staff, whose four stated goals and potential outcomes from a conference changed markedly over a period of three months. The coordinator struggled to keep the group on track with the second of these goals, namely, "to bring together public and private sector decision-makers in round table discussions and help establish some mechanism for cooperation between public and private agencies with an interest in training..."

The coordinator found it difficult to judge the degree of commitment exhibited by participants to accomplish goals: much depended upon which participants and which goals.

Planning was slow for the University's fall conference on basic skills. The coordinator sensed no progress through January and February. Different styles of planning between the academic and the business world became evident. For example, representatives of the Mayor's office had to persuade university planners that business people are not willing to attend endless meetings around vague intentions to plan a conference. "We need to meet with the bunch of them and ask them what such a conference could do for them." There was also disagreement about the definition of "basic skills."

In September, 1984, the Mayor's Office and the University of Minnesota finally co-sponsored a metropolitan conference on "Basic Skills and the Workforce." Speakers included the president of the University of Minnesota, the majority leader of the Minnesota Senate, the Vice President of Employee Relations for Dayton Hudson, and the president of the Minnesota AFL-CIO. The keynote speaker was Harold (Bud) Hodgekinson, a senior associate at IEL and nationally recognized analyst of demographic trends for public and private sector planning.

A 40-person roundtable working session was developed within the conference and focused on at-risk youth. The roundtable generated a broad range of idea for possible initiatives on which the larger community could cooperate. This session was intended to kick off a sustained collaborative effort -- the area MetroLink project.

The project that was envisioned in the session included continuing involvement of the Saint Paul and Minneapolis Mayors' offices, state government officials, the University of Minnesota, business and labor leaders, community organization leaders, and public school educators. Minorities were significantly represented in all activities. Major topics included educational and training needs of unemployed urban youth and the structurally unemployed, of workers being retrained for high-technology industries, and of workers in manufacturing industries facing decline.

The Mayor's office assigned responsibility for follow-up of the at-risk youth roundtable session within the conference to MCBEA -- the Minneapolis Community Business Employment Alliance, many of whose members were involved in the roundtable. MCBEA is a non-profit alliance of business, education, labor, community and government representatives which the Mayor had appointed to address problems of the hard-to-employ residents of Minneapolis. Rather than deliver services, however, MCBEA is a planning group to identify resources and needs, provide a forum to develop community initiatives and increase community commitment to addressing complex issues of structural unemployment.

However, having identified the need for a continuum of services from birth to age 19 to prevent unemployability, MCBEA suddenly set a new organizational priority on early childhood education and parenting. Consequently the follow-up structure planned prior to the 1984 conference was "put on hold" for later implementation.

Meanwhile, the Mayor, formerly a liberal Member of the U.S. House of Representatives, came to the conclusion that it was important to install a mechanism for "institutionalizing" change because too many approaches to solving unemployment were "here today and gone tomorrow." At his urging, the state legislature passed enabling legislation which allowed, under a joint powers act, the formation of a Youth Coordinating Board for the City. This Board was to consist of the heads of city government, board of education, county government (which includes juvenile court), the library, and the parks and recreation department. Staff for the board were hired in January, 1985. Advisory to the Board is a coordinating council for youth, a youth agencies group that the superintendent of schools has asked the Mayor to establish.

Although Minneapolis is unlikely to be viewed nationally as a city in crisis (the unemployment rate, for example, is 4.3 percent), danger signs such as teenage pregnancy and minority school enrollment (40 percent) are growing. One fifth of the school population attends non-public schools; 40,000 are enrolled in the public schools.

In the late seventies, concerns of citizen groups resulted in school and business financing of studies of declining enrollment and accountability. Realizing the need to strengthen the school system, the business community then financed development of a comprehensive Five Year Plan for 1982-1987. Although implementation is behind schedule, four advisory committees co-chaired by school and business people continue to provide leadership and financing in priority areas.

Many initiatives in Minneapolis are geared to improving employability and employment of youth. For example:

o A youth work internship program, a partnership involving the City, the schools and the Chamber of Commerce, initiated by the Mayor, has been implemented for high school students at risk.

o A transitional work internship program, also a Mayoral initiative, providing 100 one-year slots in a variety of city government jobs for unemployed high school graduates. The program is intended to encourage private employers to follow suit.

o Follow-up studies of all high school graduates (instead of the sample done currently) to identify those who have been unable to find jobs. A resource housed at the Mayor's office, the Neighborhood Employment Network, will be available to help them.

o The Private Industry Council took action to require both summer and year-round work-study jobs to be based upon participants' academic performance; participants must do well in remedial programs to "earn" paying jobs.

o The Pillsbury Company, United Way and city government are partners in setting up a youth services corporation to finance small community service projects proposed by groups of youth. (At the request of the Portland MetroLink coordinator, planning documents were made available by the Minneapolis site.)

These initiatives comprise a diverse lot of activities that have yet to be pulled into a coherent whole. The efforts and interests of those concerned seem fragmented, the programs and policies seem diffuse. The Mayor's special State of the City message delivered in January, 1986, challenged the community to collaborate on a 20-year plan to alleviate problems experienced by young people and to ensure a continually improving city of the future.

Portland, Oregon

Portland is a place where being cooperative is a way of life. A New Yorker article about Portland describes the attitude of its residents in the form of illustrative minor observations: a derelict, having finished off his bottle, wanders out of his way to place it in a trash barrel; a woman crumples a cigarette package, looks around in vain for a trash can, then opens her purse and tucks the package away.

Portland has not escaped challenges by parents, teachers, administrators and students who question seriously the performance of programs in public education. The Portland Public School System, the largest school district in the state, enrolls approximately 51,000 students. There are 10 high schools (grades 9-12), 63 Pre-kindergarten-8 facilities, 16 middle schools (grades 5-8) as well as 12 special and alternative schools.

A high rate of youth unemployment in Portland -- 33.0 percent for ages 16-21 -- is disproportionate among minority youth -- 50.5 percent. And while the 16-21 age group is only 9 percent of the workforce, it accounts for nearly 22.6 percent of all unemployment in the Portland area.

There are five priorities for youth employment and education over the next several years:

(1) Preparing young people for the present and future world of work and linking training to local industry needs;

(2) Reducing youth unemployment;

(3) Ensuring that youth who leave school before graduation are provided with opportunities to attain basic skills necessary for employment;

(4) Creating effective partnerships between key education and employment institutions; and

(5) Consolidating private sector resources, efforts and activities in youth employment.

The Portland MetroLink project was designed to create a networking structure combining the resources of the Danforth Foundation/IEL effort with the national Urban Network project, which is funded by the Aetna Foundation and operated through Brandeis University's Center for Human Resources. The structure supports collaboration among the Portland School District, city and county government, the Business Youth Exchange of the Chamber of Commerce, the Urban League, private corporations, community based organizations, the PIC and small businesses. Its purpose is to plan and implement programs that prepare youth for employment.

The school district had a long history of career and vocational/technical training, but traditional programs had demonstrated only "traditional" effects, and programs were disjointed. In 1983, the school district had redesigned its career and vocational-technical education program in light of current knowledge about connecting basic skills and career education. The city government, through its Youth Employment Coordination Council, had begun to explore ways to build cooperative relationships among private and public sector agencies throughout Portland. The Urban League also sought involvement in joint efforts to improve and coordinate resources for youth employment.

The business community, through the Chamber of Commerce, formed the Regional Youth Employment Council, later named the Business Youth Exchange, to bring coherence to the confusing multitude of individual requests that its member companies had been facing. The Edna McConnell Clark Foundation funded a joint proposal to improve existing programs of work experience, career education, pre-employment skill development and job placement through collaborative efforts.

At the heart of the MetroLink project is a group called the Leaders Roundtable. It is composed of major business leaders, civic leaders, the Mayor, a city council member, a county commissioner, and the superintendent of schools.

The rationale for the Urban Network Project was that youth employment is larger than any one agency or group of agencies can successfully address. A collaborative approach to problem-solving was intended to coordinate diverse programs to serve youth, focusing initially on a group of in-school youth, with special attention to early-leavers. The Project was intended to provide these young people with pre-employment skills and knowledge enabling them to make informed career choices, compete in finding jobs, and succeed as employees in those jobs.

The four long range goals are:

(1) to improve the ability of cross-sector participants to collaborate on youth employment activities;

(2) to develop an ongoing system to help high school graduates find jobs;

(3) to contribute to an increased understanding of the world of work among students and teachers; and

(4) to support the public schools' efforts to offer all students equal access to work preparedness and increase their appreciation of the importance of basic skills for work.

The short term goal was to assist the school district to implement its new Blue Chip and Vo-Tech Education Plan: (a) Career Horizons and Career Exploration program for eighth, ninth and tenth grade students, and (b) a placement program for graduating seniors.

From the outset of the project, all major participants have subscribed to the goals of the project but also have had their own agendas. Schools have sought support, funding and resources needed to produce graduates who can read, write, compute, interact with others, think and solve problems; businesses have wanted to participate in development of curricula so that they have employee candidates who have basic academic skills, knowledge of the requirements of the workplace, and the ability to adapt to change; local government has wanted to reduce crime and unemployment among youth, and has hoped that youth will become productive, contributing members of the community; finally, the Urban League has been attempting to improve its image in the total community and has sought to target programs for black youth.

Key actors representing the collaborating agencies have been supportive: the mayor and one Council member stated their willingness to contribute personal time to organizing and participating in the Leaders Roundtable. The Superintendent has been anxious from the outset to develop and disseminate models for the whole school system. Representation among the business community, led by the vice chair of the U.S. Bancorp, Oregon's major financial institution, has included the Portland Chamber of Commerce and 14 adjacent chambers. The Business Youth Exchange, composed of staff hired by contributions of members of various chambers, has been a link with area businesses. The Private Industry Council is also represented through its chairperson.

A staff planning group has supported the Leaders Roundtable and helped shape its agenda. The group initially consisted of five individuals. They were the MetroLink Coordinator, who represents the school system to state and local governments and reports to the superintendent; a youth employment specialist hired by the school district, who reports to the Career/Vocational Education Director; the executive director to the Business Youth Exchange, whose 15-member board is funded by the business community; the Director of Youth Services for the Urban League; and the city's liaison with the school system, who reports to the City Council and to the Director of the city's Intergovernmental Affairs Office. This staff group has expanded to add the Director of the PIC, an administrative assistant from the Mayor's office, an administrative assistant from the Council Member's office and the coordinator of five city youth service agencies.

The Leaders Roundtable meets quarterly to oversee collaborative plans and activities. An executive committee meets monthly. Members of the Roundtable agreed not to send stand-ins to meetings because decision-making capacity was essential to ensure immediate action to implement agreements. Membership on the Roundtable required that people have "reach" in the community; job titles or elected positions did not assure membership.

The lack of negative impact upon the Roundtable of the upset victory of Bud Clark in the mayoral race illustrates the commitment of the participants to a collaborative process. Yet, there are problems to be overcome. The group of collaborating agencies noticeably lacks commitment and involvement from organized labor and higher education. Five Youth Centers, agencies that are funded through contracts with the city and are perceived as community-based organizations, early on presented a focus for negotiations to resolve conflicts about contracts for youth service and administrative authority. The early attitudes of the Private Industry Council staff toward standards for youth employability reflected their roots in CETA-funded social service programs.

The Project focused at first on in-school youth, with special attention to early-leavers, attempting to provide pre-employment skills and career search knowledge. The networking structure was both a means for achieving the aims of the project and a two-year process goal. Long range aims are to create a collaborative structure to ensure coordinated development and delivery of youth employment services and to assure that Portland's in-school and out-of-school youth are employable.

The Coordinator characterizes his role as catalytic and compares leadership linkages on the Roundtable as "coaches and quarterbacks" -- that is, a mutually helpful relationship rather than one in which one group merely carries out the wishes of the other.

The leaders thoroughly indoctrinate other planning group members that they invite to serve with them. In three two-hour sessions they bring them up to speed around issues on the national scene, the local problem, project goals and objectives, and current elements of the local project.

The Portland MetroLink project has benefited from developments in other MetroLink sites. For example, the Portland and Hartford MetroLink coordinators exchanged instruments and plans. Specifically, materials used in Hartford's Project 1050, which monitors recent high school graduates' employment and entry into training or postsecondary education, were helpful in a related effort in Portland.

It is clear that the collaborative strategy using the Roundtable to lend coherence to the diverse programs, agencies, policies and leadership approaches has made a difference. For example, this past summer through Roundtable motivation, programs that were previously run and funded separately were joined together under a single administrative agency, and funds were pooled. The schools which were providing the basic educational services needed to enhance summer youth employment increased their efforts to support the joint program. As a result of Roundtable discussion, top-level decisionmakers were immediately available to take action and $100,000 was transferred by the school system to summer training programs.

This was an historic event in which the collaborative process enabled the school district, the employment and training administration of the city, the mayor's office, the PIC and the five youth service centers to consolidate their program budgets for summer youth employment. The City Council unanimously approved $350,000 of city general funds combined with funds from the Department of Housing, community development funds, Water Bureau money and some State Department of Transportation money to be designated for the summer program and administered by the PIC. The school district handled basic skills remediation coupled with summer jobs and a cohort within the PIC program was required to go part-time to basic skills training classes.

When the new mayor trimmed the city budget, one casualty was a key person on the planning group for the Roundtable, the city-school liaison. Needed funds to continue the work of this person were contributed by the school system and the PIC to compensate for the lack of funds in the mayor's office. Roundtable members have suggested using collaboration to address additional issues related to youth employability, such as dropout prevention -- issues which are usually confined to a single agency.

The project evolved generally in the way that the Coordinator envisioned it. A new grant from the Edna McConnell Clark Foundation to support a nine-month planning project to create a two-to-three-year work plan is helping to solidify efforts to implement a comprehensive youth employment system. The strategy is to link all groups that have had continuing roles in youth employment, with the expectation that through the planning and cooperative work, some agencies will alter the way they operate. For instance, there is no concerted response from the business community around jobs; personnel directors and supervisors of entry level employees may need training to adjust attitudes and expectations; the schools lack integrated vocational curricula, especially in the middle schools -- these are all problems that this effort may cause to change.

Mayor Bud Clark, looking ahead five years, said that the purpose of the Roundtable should be "to run ourselves out of a job:"

> *We should have a good handle on the employment system and training system by then. Maybe we'll get into other areas...be a problem solving group for other issues. If it goes right we could anticipate problems instead of do remediation -- help kids define their own future, avoid boredom and frustration.*

Saint Louis, Missouri

The involvement of the Saint Louis business community in helping the public education system to connect youth with private sector employment has been almost entirely programmatic. While certain positions and roles within the Saint Louis Public Schools have been responsible for vocational and career education programs, until recently there has been little long-term mutual commitment of business and the schools toward addressing common concerns. In the late seventies, a number of programs developed cooperatively between schools and companies, and they became work-study prototypes. Analysts of school-business partnerships noted the early commitment of Ralston Purina in this field. There has been minimal involvement by the Saint Louis business community as a whole, however.

The major business leaders of Saint Louis are concentrated in a group called Civic Progress, which is composed of 29 chief executive officers of the major corporations in the metropolitan area. Any initiatives of consequence on the part of the business community emanate from this group. Most specific activities, i.e. discrete programs have been sponsored by the Regional Commerce and Growth Association, which also serves as a clearinghouse for information.

In 1983, the business community was seeking ways to define a collaborative role with the public school system as the school system, whose population was largely minority and low-income, was working out a voluntary desegregation plan with the county school systems. At the same time, public attention was turning toward programs to improve skills, knowledge of teachers, principals and other school administrators throughout the metropolitan area -- a response to the widespread calls for reform of the nation's public schools. In the spring, a new superintendent was chosen from outside the system.

At that point the education committee of Civic Progress, spearheaded by the chairman and two or three other executives, decided to examine options available to business for the purpose of improvement of the schools and the school system. Civic Progress found funds to support a former business executive to work on the problem in a systemic rather than programmatic way -- for example, to look beyond the support of the adopt-a-school program already underway or simple expansion of work-study programs.
When the Danforth Foundation, which is located in Saint Louis, decided to grant funds for the IEL MetroLink project, Civic Progress sought to become involved in order to gain access to information nationally and to clarify alternatives.

The Coordinator took advantage of the MetroLink network in two major ways. First, he drew upon IEL resources to become as knowledgeable as possible in a short period about the issues, directions and implications of the national school reform/improvement trends. As a former corporate executive in a large company, he had access to and felt at ease with business leaders. Because he had worked on government relations in his corporate life, he was aware of the impact of policy debates, particularly at the state level, on local practices and structures.

The Coordinator visited Atlanta along with Saint Louis business people in order to study the Partnership and to exchange views with various leaders from different sectors. The coordinator also visited Hartford to learn about the School--Business Collaborative and Boston to learn about the Boston Compact. IEL provided access to a consultant in public/private collaboration who visited with the Civic Progress education committee.

Over an eighteen-month period, the Coordinator confirmed and expanded his strong hunch that business could have a major role in improving educational resources in Saint Louis only if business leaders understood the broad policy issues. including the impact of state policies on the city. He approached concerned leaders in Kansas City and arranged for the Missouri Commissioner of Education to discuss with leaders from both cities the development of state education policies, the structure of public education in the state, financing, urban problems, desegregation and other matters to meet. Lines of communication on urban education matters of mutual concern opened for the first time between Kansas City and Saint Louis.

Certain issues that had arisen in other MetroLink sites became evident in developments in Saint Louis. For example, a decision by the superintendent to increase pressures for administrative accountability in order to respond to pressures for school improvement underscored the tension between supervisory evaluation and incentives for staff development. The Atlanta Partnership, through its Principals Institute, had begun to deal successfully with similar tensions. Similarly, there has been some interest expressed in establishing some way of improving two Saint Louis high schools through agreements about goals and standards based on the Boston Compact.

The MetroLink Coordinator, meanwhile, became a member of a statewide task force on education and has been serving on the steering committee of a federally-mandated long-range plan for the school system, among several boards, commissions, and other planning groups. In addition, informal meetings among business people and educational policy-makers, and between officials of the public schools and local higher education institutions have been arranged.

By the fall of 1985, the Coordinator had established a clear role and had acquired considerable expertise and credibility as a resource for understanding policy matters affecting local education problems and for interpreting possible alternatives for action by the business community. Overall, awareness of the issues affecting leadership for human resource development has increased. The importance of the role of a single key individual in assuming responsibility for initiatives is clear, as well as the role of neutral forums for exploring potential collaboration and of intermediaries in building structures for continued examination of mutual needs and interests.

Saint Louis leaders are aware that it is critically important to maintain the essential components of collaboration until the point where circumstances are right for both the school system and the business community to take stronger initiatives in addressing their mutual problems and concerns. There is little question that if the Coordinator had been concerned primarily with programmatic issues, momentum toward collaboration would have been greatly lessened.

Interviews with community leaders revealed a sense that collaboration would not proceed without consensus about a common and compelling need, together with a climate in which the political interests of strong leaders coincide with this sense of need. Two or three years from now, institutional turf issues will lessen and can be overcome if new organizational structures are in place and capable of carrying on collaborative efforts. Efforts can be sustained and reliable leadership assured primarily by institutionalization. "There was a feeling that function would follow form, that is, if the institution for collaboration is well-established, the rest would follow."

Nonetheless, the MetroLink coordinator suggests, some concerns may be peculiar to Saint Louis:

> *First, there was less concern for the future of the effort than for the need to get something established in the first place. Second was a preoccupation with the personalities and motives of main actors in the effort...- This would support the contention that that which can be done in any given city is specific to that city.*